The Spice of Life

The essay may be as austere and sublime as a Himalayan peak it may be fun or the prickliest sort of intellectual stimulation its range of subject matter is infinite says *Charles B Shaw in this lively volume*

This varied collection of *American Essays* offers a gem of humor by the irrepressible James Thurber Gilbert Highet s charming vignette on George Washington Walter Lippmann s stirring cry for education toward world responsibility H L Mencken s castigation of the Southern character Joseph Wood Krutch s engaging observations on the month of April, and many more scintillating pieces of writing from America s best authors on many subjects

Ranging from the 18th Century to our own day these brilliant and rewarding essays paint a wonderfully intimate and informal history of America, reflecting its spirit of individualism and belief in the responsibility of the individual to say honestly what he thinks There are hours of reading pleasure in this sparkling anthology of wit and wisdom on topics ranging from politics to nature, from humor to criticism

American Essays

Edited with an introduction and notes by

CHARLES B SHAW



A MENTOR BOOK
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Some bidding of orderliness however suggests the wisdom of a definition That irascible genius who won a part of his mid-eighteenth century bread and butter both by writing essays and by compiling a dictionary defined the essay as "a loose sally of the mind an irregular indigested piece not a regular and orderly composition Dr Johnson here apparently harked back some forty years to Addison s opening paragraph of the 249th *Spectator* When I make Choice of a Subject that has not been treated on by others I throw together my Reflections on it without any Order or Method so that they may appear rather in the Looseness and Freedom of an Essay than in the Regularity of a Set Discourse "

There is no literary form that embraces so wide a variety of inclusions Adjectives commonly used to describe the sorts of essays indicate this diversity familiar critical didactic infor mal nature expository historical reflective travel personal descriptive and humorous are a dozen of these qualifiers The noun too is varied article character sketch causerie feuille ton fantasy anecdote paper satire miscellany ephemera im pressions and reverie are another dozen terms applied to the multiformity of the essay The composition that can be thus diversely denoted cannot be rigidly defined The essay may be as personal as a toupee or as austere and sublime as a Hima layan peak it may be light as the foam on faery seas or erudite as the disquisitions of him whose

> " words of learned length and thundering sound
> Amaz d the gazing rustics rang d around

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tabatory quatrains about embattled Americans who fired a shot heard round the world.

I have no wish a century and a quarter after Sydney Smith to make the eagle scream but it is I think an obvious truth that of all the species of *belles lettres* the essay is one domain in which American writing will have been found to stand up in quality and in worthwhile quantity to any output anywhere To any list of say eight names—Lamb Hazlitt DeQuincey Macaulay Stevenson Pater Beerbohm Chesterton or in the language which fathered the essay Sainte Beuve Taine Maeterlinck Valéry Brunetière Gourmont Renan Lemaitre —to such lists eight names from the following selections will supply a comparable accomplishment

It is an anthologist s cross that such factors as space limitations the crotchets of publishers or agents or authors and the complexities or costs of reprinting copyrighted materials do not permit the generous—and sometimes the specific—inclusions that he would like to set forth Dr Johnson once remarked (although he had the author rather than the anthologist in mind) A man will turn over half a library to make one book The parade of American essayists has been an imposing and is a satisfying array A lengthy catalogue of names would make tedious reading It must suffice to say that for every writer whose work is sampled hereafter there is a matching pair or more that has had to be omitted For Franklin there is a Jefferson and an Irving for Holmes there is a Lowell and a Curtis for Aldrich, a Samuel McChord Crothers and a Charles Dudley Warner for John Burroughs a John Muir and a Dallas Lore Sharp for Broun, a Benchley and a Sherman and a Woollcott.

From time to time there are worriers who declare that the essay is outmoded or dying Delightfully disproving essays are written to prove the point Miss Repplier in the heyday of Stevenson and Pater—a quarter-century before the first of two world wars made the Victorian way of life and literature an incredibly remote era—wrote *The Passing of the Essay* in reply to such ghoulish critics And so when I am told, among other prophetic items, that the light essay is passing rapidly away and that, in view of its approaching death bed it cannot be safely recommended as a good opening for enterprise I am fain before acquiescing gloomily in such a decree to take heart of grace and look a little around me It is discouraging doubtless for the essayist to be suddenly informed that his

polished to the texture of satin Its range of subject matter is infinite One might substitute essay for man in the sentence from Terence s *The Self Tormentor* I am a man and nothing that concerns humanity do I deem a matter of indifference to me In place of a sedate definition perhaps we may compromise on the analogy of the twentieth-century American essayist Stuart Pratt Sherman 'The ordinary life indeed is itself an essay starting from nowhere in particular and arriving at no definite destination this side of death but picking its way like a little river now with bright speed and now with reluctance and fond lingerings over all sorts of obstacles and through all sorts of channels which would be merely humdrum but for the shifting moods and humors that play over a bottom of commonplace with the transient magic of shadow and light

The form can boast a lengthy and distinguished development during the years that America still belonged to the Indians Its father Michel Eyquem de Montaigne published his first volume of *Essais* in 1571 In England Sir Francis Bacon s third edition and final complete collection of fifty-eight *Essays* was printed only five years after the landing on Plymouth Rock Cowley Addison Steele Dr Johnson Goldsmith and their peers were accomplished practitioners while the citizens of the colonies were busied in subduing the wilderness In essay writing the continent and the mother country had a long head start over the colonies and the states

1820 was the year in which the Essays of Elia began to appear It was in the midst of a rich period in English literature Keats s *Eve of St Agnes* Shelley s *Prometheus Unbound* and Sir Walter s *Ivanhoe* (note by the way Mark Twain s pertinent—or impertinent—comment in the body of this book) appeared during this twelvemonth In 1820 the Reverend Sydney Smith Georgian wit (the accompanying essay by Charles S Brooks will show that this is not entirely a complimentary designation) inquired in an elsewise forgotten publication In the four quarters of the globe who reads an American book or goes to an American play or looks at an American picture or statue? By this same early date in our national life parenthetically Bryant had written *Thanatopsis* Irving had published his *Knickerbocker History of New York* and *The Sketch Book* Cooper s first novel had appeared and Emerson may well have been mulling over in his mind the series of soon-to-be written poems that included the somehow apposite and re-

centuries old or Lamb only three centuries fresher as not suited to their palates will find among their countrymen moderns and contemporaries to sati fy their appetites But do not demand of the writer that which he cannot be expected to offer We do not anticipate the sweeping grandeur of the Beethov n Ninth in the brevity of a Chopin Prelude Elizabeth Drew in *The Enjoyment of Literature* warns of the limitations imposed on the genre and of th frustrations to which the author is exposed "The essayist has so few baits with which to catch and hold the reader's attention He has no story to arouse his curiosity and no rhyme to charm his ear his space is so limited that he has but little room for movement, for changes of tone and pace *Per contra* A. Edward Newton who (as Christopher Morley later reminds us) has written many delightful essays on the delights of book-collecting remarks that the essayist makes few demands upon his reader "You may dip into him how and when you will in the five or six impatient minutes before dinner time which would otherwise be wasted or wor e—used for grumbling And Miss Reppl er again assures us that an appreciation of the essay is the natural result of reading it. Like virtue it is its own reward.

As there are those extremists who damn essays as mere lavend r and faded lace there are at the other pole those ivory towerish folk who would invest these bits of prose with impossible expectations of combined charms *and excellences* Unremittingly brilliant thought sustained eloquent style penetrating insight a sparkling cerebration and an illumination of the depths of emotion—the e they effect to anticipate all in one capsule The reality generally lies between. For most twentieth-century readers Mr Newton s down to-earth matter of-factness is the honest and believable approach to es ay reading

Like the rose the essay called by any other name would *smell as sweet* Like the rose too it will continue to be a some*times thorny* but lovely floriferous and vigorous growth For thinking man it is an essential outlet because while man persists on this planet he will reflect upon and ponder over an infinite variety *of* subjects on political obligations the coming of spring football humor his own sad *or joyful or* ludicrous experiences his hopes and aspirations the failings of those about him the various sights and ounds and smells and feels of the world the prose and poetry *of th*e major and the minor writers the glories and the malfeasances of the great and the

work is *in articulo mortis* He feels as a carpenter might feel were he told that chairs and doors are going out of fashion and that he had better turn his attention to mining engineer ing or a new food for infants Perhaps he endeavors to explain that a great many chairs were sold in the past week that they are not without utility and that they seem to him as much in favor as ever Such feeble arguments meet with no response Furniture he is assured—on the authority of the speaker—is distinctly out of date The spirit of the time calls for some thing different and the best business talent—delightful phrase and equally applicable to a windowframe or an epic—is moving in another direction

Four decades later these macabre misgivings are voiced again *An article in The Forum for July 1933 begins* 'The familiar essay that lavender scented little old lady of literature, has passed away In its place on the magazine pages we find *crisp articles blatant exposés or statistic laden surveys* The argument concludes One day perhaps her pale ghost will not appear at all and the hard young sociologists can have *her pages all to themselves But I hope not For all their* cocksure-*ologies* they cannot comfort us the way she did—when she was at her best In *Harper s Magazine* for Decem *ber 1935 a writer enlarges on the obituary* 'The essay has indeed fallen upon desuetude a desuetude brought on by in nocuousness It died a natural death of pernicious anaemia It *was bloodless long before it was decently laid away in oblivion* Its last gasp of vitality was given out by Matthew Arnold and Ruskin Here are a sample half dozen adjectives or phrases with which the writer berates the essays which have appeared since those of Arnold and John Ruskin heavily quaint al most obscenely nice simpering a false pretufication " gentility and archness *and namby pamby stuff This is* obviously bosh and twaddle What can one find that is obscene-ly nice in the work of Randolph Bourne? Does Mencken s castigation of the South *show a false prettification? Can you* imagine Mr Dooley simpering? Is Heywood Broun s hard hitting a kind of namby pamby stuff? Virginia Woolf heartens us in *The Common Reader* *the essay is alive there is* no reason to despair As the conditions change so the essayist, most sensitive of all plants to public opinion adapts himself and if he is good makes *the best of the change and if he is* bad the worst.

The essay has indeed had a vigorous twentieth-century flowering in America *Those readers who regard Bacon four*

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706 1790) Boston boy turned Ph la d lph an printer scientifically minded player with lightning inventor practical philosopher philanthropist signer of the Declaration of Independence plenipotent ary to France and American negotiator in England wit and *bon vi ant* was one of the early great Americans to be in add tion to all his other accomplishm nts also a man of letters His *Autobiog phy* is a cornerstone of American literature Using the pseudonym of Richard Saunders he founded *Poor R ha d's Alma ack* In the introduction to the first (1733) issue of thi annual m lange of informat on ad ice, witty aphorisms, and moral precepts, Franklin ribbed his chief competitor Titan Leeds, publisher of the *American Almanack* Leeds replied with an abusive and humorless rejoinder Franklin continued the repartee in the next issue of his *Almanack* Leeds again repl ed and in the 1735 *Almanack* Franklin carried a third installment. Leeds d ed in 1739 Franklin s fourth and concluding contribution to the ep sode appeared in the 1740 *Almanack* The four excerpts are combined here in one essay as an example of the sort of hoax which Frank lin loved to perpetrate

The Titan Leeds Hoax

COURTEOUS READER,

I might in this place attempt to gain thy Favour by declaring that I write Almanacks with no other View than that of the publick Good but in this I should not be sincere and Men are now adays too wise to be deceiv d by Pretences how spe cious soever The plain Truth of the Matter is I am excessive poor and my Wife good Woman, is I tell her excessive proud she cannot bear she says to sit spinning in her Shift of Tow while I do nothing but gaze at the Stars and has threaten d more than once to burn all my books and Rattling Traps (as she calls my Instruments) if I do not make some profitable Use of them for the Good of my Family The Printer has offer d me some considerable share of the Profits, and I have thus begun to comply with my Dame s Desire

Indeed this Motive would have had Force enough to have made me publish an Almanack many Years since had it not been overpowered by my Regard for my good Friend and

lesser specimens of humanity and so on and on and on Whether these reflections and ponderings be called essays or—in more stylish current patter—profiles or pieces or criticism or articles or reviews does not much matter What is important is the continuing production and the preservation of these ad ventures of men s minds Nonessential styles and trimmincs may change the mode of the essay may at times become less literary less introspective more practical more factual—but the need for such reflection and its interpretation in a writ ten record will always remain Current nomenclature is far less important than being The following selections from Paine Highet Johnson Martin White and others show how we have through all our national life been continuingly—and are of late increasingly—involved in war s alarms and repercus sions its ominous preliminaries its ghastly actualities and its troubling aftermaths That the essay—the spirit and the mani festation—thrives in even our troubled atomic days witness—to name only half a dozen among their peers—such writings as those of Johnson and Lippmann Edman and Krutch Thur ber and White

This book is but the tiniest and most fragmentary sampling of an immense body of rewarding print Among these essayists who follow and among their fellows on the shelves in that half a library which has been turned over—Good hunting!

CHARLES B SHAW

Swarthmore Pennsylvania.
October 1954

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706-1790) Boston boy turned Philadelphian printer scientifically minded player with lightning inventor practical philosopher philanthropist signer of the Declaration of Independence plenipotentiary to France and American negotiator in England wit and bon *vivant* was one of the early great Americans to be in addition to all his other accomplishments, also a man of letters His *Autobiography* is a cornerstone of American literature Using the pseudonym of Richard Saunders he founded *Poor Richard's Almanack* In the introduction to the first (1733) issue of this annual mélange of information, advice witty aphorisms, and moral precepts Franklin ribbed his chief competitor Titan Leeds, publisher of the *American Almanack* Leeds replied with an abusive and humorless rejoinder Franklin continued the repartee in the next issue of his *Almanack*. Leeds again replied and in the 1735 *Almanack* Franklin carried a third installment. Leeds died in 1739 Franklin's fourth and concluding contribution to the episode appeared in the 1740 *Almanack* The four excerpts are combined here in one essay as an example of the sort of hoax which Franklin loved to perpetrate.

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Fellow Student Mr *Titan Leeds* whose Interest I was extreamly unwilling to hurt But this Obstacle (I am far from speaking it with Pleasure) is soon to be removed since inexorable Death who was never known to respect Merit has already prepared the mortal Dart the fatal Sister has already extended her destroying Shears and that Ingenious Man must soon be taken from us He dies by my Calculation made at his Request on Oct 17 1733 3 h 29 m P M at the very instant of the ☌ of ☉ and ☿ By his own Calculation he will survive till the 26th of the same Month This small Difference between us we have disputed whenever we have met these 9 Years past but at length he is inclinable to agree with my Judgment Which of us is most exact a little Time will now determine As therefore these Provinces may not longer expect to see any of his Performances after this Year I think myself free to take up the Task and request a share of the publick Encouragement which I am the more apt to hope for on this Account that the Buyer of my Almanack may consider himself not only as purchasing an useful Utensil but as performing an Act of Charity to his poor *Friend and Servant*

R. SAUNDERS

COURTEOUS READERS

Your kind and charitable Assistance last Year in purchasing so large an Impression of my Almanacks has made my Circumstances much more easy in the World & requires my grateful Acknowledgment My Wife has been enabl d to get a Pot of her own and is no longer oblig d to borrow one from a Neighbour nor have we ever since been without something of our own to put in it She has also got a pair of Shoes two new Shifts and a warm new Petticoat and for my part I have bought a second hand Coat so good that I am now not asham d to go to Town or be seen there These Things have render d her Temper so much more pacifick than it us d to be that I may say I have slept more and more quietly within this last Year than in the three foregoing Years put together Accept my hearty Thanks therefor and my sincere Wishes for your Health and Prosperity

In the Preface to my last Almanack I foretold the Death of my dear old Friend and Fellow-Student the learned and ingenious Mr *Titan Leeds* which was to be on the 17th of *October* 1733 3 h 29 m P M at the very instant of the ☌ of ☉ and ☿ By his own Calculation he was to survive till the 26th of same Month, and expire in the Time of the Eclipse

near 11 o clock A M At which of these times he died or whether he be really yet dead I cannot at this present Writing positively assure my Readers forasmuch as a Disorder in my own Family demanded my Presence and would not permit me as I had intended to be with him in his last Moments to receive his last Embrace to close his Eyes and do the Duty of a Friend in performing the last Offices to the Departed Therefore it is that I cannot positively affirm whether he be dead or not for the Stars only show to the Skilful what will happen in the natural & universal Chain of Causes and Effects but tis well known, that the Events which would otherwise certainly happen at certain Times in the Course of Nature are sometimes set aside or postpon d for wise and good Reasons by the immediate particular Dispositions of Providence which particular Dispositions the Stars can by no Means discover or foreshow There is however (and I cannot speak it with out Sorrow) there is the strongest Probability that my dear Friend is *no mo e* for there appears in his Name as I am assur d, an Almanack for the Year 1734 in which I am treated in a very gross & unhandsome Manner in which I am call d *a fal e P edicter an Ignorant a conceited Scribler a Fool and a Lya* Mr *Le ds* was too well bred to use any Man so inde cently & so scurrilously & moreover his Esteem and Affection for me was extraordinary So that it is to be fear d that Pamphlet may be only a Contrivance of somebody or other who hopes perhaps to sell two or three Year s Almanacks still by the sole Force and Virtue of Mr *Leeds*' Name but cer tainly to put Words into the Mouth of a Gentleman and a Man of Letters against his Friend which the meanest and most scandalous of the People might be asham d to utter even in a drunken Quarrel is an unpardonable Injury to his Mem ory and an Imposition upon the Publick

Mr *Leeds* was not only profoundly skilful in the useful Science he profess d but he was a Man of *exemplary Sobri ety* a most *sin e e F end* and an *exact Perfo mer of his Wo d* These valuable Qualifications with many others so much endear d him to me that although it should be so that, contrary to my Prediction & his own he might possibly be yet alive yet my Loss of Honour as a Prognosticator cannot afford me so much Mortification as his Life Health & Safety would give me Joy and Satisfaction

I am *Cou teous and Ki d Read r*

Your poor Fri nd and Servant

R SAUNDERS

Octob 30 1733

COURTEOUS READER

This is the third Time of my appearing in Print hitherto very *much to my own Satisfaction* and *I have Reason to hope to* the Satisfaction of the Publick also for the Publick is generous and has been very charitable and good to me I should be ungrateful then if I did not take every Opportunity of expressing my Gratitude for *ingratum si dixeris omnia dixeris* I therefore return the Publick my most humble and hearty Thanks

Whatever may be the Musick of the Spheres how great soever the Harmony of the Stars tis certain there is no Har*mony among the Stargazers but they are perpetually growl*ing and snarling at one another like strange Curs or like some Men at their Wives I had resolv d to keep the Peace on my own part & affront none of them and I shall persist in that Resolution But having receiv d much Abuse from *Titan Leeds* deceas d (*Titan Leeds when living would not have us d* me so!) I say having receiv d much Abuse from the Ghost of *Titan Leeds* who pretends to be still living and to write Almanacks in Spight of me and my Predictions I cannot help saying that tho I take it patiently I take it very unkindly And whatever *he may pretend tis undoubtedly true that he is really de*funct and dead First because the Stars are seldom disappointed never but in the Case of wise Men *sapiens dominabitur astris* and they foreshow d his Death at the Time I predicted it Secondly 'Twas requisite and necessary he should die punctually at that Time for the Honour of *Astrology* the Art profess d both by him and his Father before him Thirdly 'Tis plain *to every one that reads his two last Almanacks (for* 1734 and 35) that they are not written with that *Life* his Performances use to be written with the Wit is low and flat the little Hints dull and spiritless nothing smart in them but *Hudibras s Verses* against Astrology at the Heads of the Months in the last which no *Astrologer but a dead one would* have inserted and no Man *living* would or could write such Stuff as the rest But lastly I convince him in his own Words that he *is dead (ex ore suo condemnatus est)* for in his Preface to his Almanack for 1734 he says *Saunders adds another GROSS FALSHOOD in his Almanack vi that by my own Calculation I shall survive until the 26th of the said Month October 1733 which is as untrue as the former* Now if it be as Leeds

says *untrue* and a *gross Falshood* that he surviv d till the 26th of October then it is certainly *true* that he died *before* that Time And if he died before that Time he is d ad now to all Intents and Purposes any thing he may say to the Contrary notwithstanding And at what Time before the 26th is it so likely he should die as at the Time by me predicted, vi the 17th of October aforesaid? But if some People will walk and be troublesome after Death it may perhaps be born with a little because it cannot well be avoided unless one would be at the Pains and Expence of laying them in the *Red Sea* how ev r they should not presume too much upon the Liberty al low d them I know Confinement must needs be mighty irk some to the free Spirit of an Astronomer and I am too com passionate to proceed suddenly to Extremities with it never theless tho I resolve with Reluctance I shall not long defer if it does not speedily learn to treat its living Friends with better Manners

I am *Courteous Reader your obl ged Friend and Servant*
R. SAUNDERS

Octob 30 1734

COURTEOUS READER,

You may remember that in my first Almana k publish d for the Ye r 1733 I predicted the Death of my dear Friend *Titan Leeds* Philomat to happen that Year on the 17th Day of October 3 h. 29 m P M The good Man it seems died ac cord ngly but W B and A B have continu d to publish Almanacks in his Name ever since asserting for some Years that he was st ll living At length when the Truth could no longer be conceal d from the World they confess his Death in thei Almanack for 1739 but pretend that he died not till last Year and that before his Departure he had furnish d them with Calculations for seven Years to come Ah my Fr ends these are poor Shifts and thin Disguises of which indeed I should have taken little or no Notice if you had not at the same Time accus d me as a false Predictor an aspersion that the more affects me as my whole Livelyhood depends on a contrary Character

But to put this Matter beyond Dispute I shall acquaint the World wi h a Fact, as strange & surprising as it is true bein, as follows vi

On the 4th Instant towards Midnight, as I sat in my li tle

Study writing this Preface I fell fast asleep & continu d in that Condition for some time without dreaming any thing to my Knowledge On awaking I found lying before me the following Letter *viz*

DEAR FRIEND SAUNDERS

My Respect for you continues even in this separate State and I am griev d to see the Aspersions thrown on you by the Malevolence of avaricious Publishers of Almanacks who envy your Success They say Your Prediction of my Death in 1733 was false, and they pretend that I remain d alive many Years after But I do hereby certify that I did actually die at that Time precisely at the Hour you mention d with a Variation only of 5 m 53 sec. which must be allow d to be no great Matter in such Cases And I do farther declare that I furnish d them with no Calcu lations of the Planets Motions etc seven Years after my Death as they are pleas d to give out so that the Stuff they publish as an Almanack in my Name is no more mine than tis yours

You will wonder perhaps how this Paper comes writ ten on your Table You must know that no separate Spir its are under any Confinement till after the final Settle ment of all Accounts In the mean time we wander where we please visit our old Friends observe their Actions enter sometimes into their Imaginations and give them Hints waking or sleeping that may be of advantage to them Finding you asleep I enter d your left Nostril ascended into your Brain found out where the Ends of those Nerves were fasten d that move your right Hand and Fingers by the Help of which I am now writing unknown to you but when you open your Eyes you will see that the Hand written is mine tho wrote with yours

The People of this Infidel Age perhaps will hardly believe this S ory But you may give them these three Signs by which they shall be convinc d of the Truth of it About the middle of June next J J—n *Philomat* shall be openly reconcil d to the Church of Rome and give all his Goods and Chattles to the Chappel being perverted by a *certain Country* Schoolmaster On the 7th of September following my old Friend W B—t shall be sober 9 Hours to the Astonishment of all his Neighbours and about the same time W B and A B will publish another

Almanack in my Name in Spight of Truth and Common Sense

As I can see much clearer into Futurity since I got free from the dark Prison of Flesh in which I was continually molested and almost blinded with Fogs arising from Tiff and the Smoke of burnt Drams I shall in kindness to you, frequently give you Information of Things to come for the Improvement of your Almanack.

Being dear Dick, your affectionate Friend

T LEEDS

For my own Part I am convinc d that the above Letter is genuine If the Reader doubts of it, let him carefully observe the three Signs and if they do not actually come to pass believe as he pleases

I am his humble Friend

R SAUNDERS

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the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph What we obtain too cheap we esteem too lightly tis dearness only that gives every thing its value Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated. Britain with an army to enforce her tyranny has declared that she has a right (*not only to* TAX) but to BIND *us in* ALL CASES WHATSOEVER and if being *bound in that manner* is not slavery then is there not such a thing as slavery upon earth. Even the expression is impious for so unlimited a power can belong only to God.

Whether the independence of the continent was declared too soon or delayed too long I will not now enter into as an argument my own simple opinion is, that had it been eight months earlier it would have been much better We did not make a proper use of last winter neither could we while we were in a dependent state However the fault if it were one was all our own we have none to blame but ourselves But no great deal is lost yet all that Howe has been doing for this month past is rather a ravage than a conquest, which the spirit of the Jerseys a year ago would have quickly repulsed and which time and a little resolution will soon recover

I have as little superstition in me as any man living but my secret opinion has ever been, and still is that God Almighty will not give up a people to military destruction or leave them unsupportedly to perish who have so earnestly and so repeatedly sought to avoid the calamities of war by every decent method which wisdom could invent. Neither have I so much of the infidel in me as to suppose that He has relinquished the government of the world and given us up to the care of devils and as I do not I cannot see on what grounds the king of Britain can look up to Heaven for help against us a common murderer a highwayman or a house breaker has as good a pretence as he

'Tis surprising to see how rapidly a panic will sometimes run through a country All nations and ages have been subject to them Britain has trembled like an ague at the report of a French fleet of flat bottomed boats and in the fourteenth century the whole English army after ravaging the kingdom of France was driven back like men petrified with fear and this brave exploit was performed by a few broken forces collected and headed by a woman Joan of Arc Would that heaven might inspire some Jersey maid to spirit up her countrymen and save her fair fellow sufferers from ravage and ravishment!

mill on a small creek between the bridge and the ferry and made their way through some marshy grounds up to the town of Hackensack, and there passed the river We brought off as much baggage as the wagons could contain the rest was lost. The simple object was to bring off the garrison and to march them on till they could be strengthened by the Jersey or Pennsylvania militia so as to be enabled to make a stand We stayed four days at Newark collected in our out posts with some Jersey militia, and marched out twice to meet the enemy on being informed that they were advancing though our numbers were greatly inferior to theirs Howe in my little opinion committed a great error in generalship in not throwing a body of forces off from Staten Island through Amboy by which means he might have seized all our stores at Brunswick and intercepted our march into Pennsylvania but if we believe the power of hell to be limited we must likewise believe that their agents are under some providential control

I shall not now attempt to give all the particulars of our retreat to the Delaware suffice it for the present to say that both officers and men though greatly harrassed and fatigued frequently without rest, covering or provision the inevitable consequences of a long retreat bore it with a manly and martial spirit. All their wishes centered in one which was that the country would turn out and help them to drive the enemy back Voltaire has remarked that King William never appeared to full advantage but in difficulties and in action the same remark may be made on General Washington for the character fits him There is a natural firmness in some minds which cannot be unlocked by trifles but which when unlocked, discovers a cabinet of fortitude and I reckon it among those kind of public blessings which we do not immediately see that God hath blest him with uninterrupted health and given him a mind that can even flourish upon care

I shall conclude this paper with some miscellaneous remarks on the state of our affairs and shall begin with asking the following question Why is it that the enemy have left the New England provinces and made these middle ones the seat of war? The answer is easy New England is not infested with tories and we are I have been tender in raising the cry against these men and used numberless arguments to show them their danger but it will not do to sacrifice a world to either their folly or their baseness The period is now arrived in which either they or we must change our sentiments or one or both must fall. And what is a tory? Good God! what is he? I should

considered militia as the best troops in the world for a sudden exertion but they will not do for a long campaign. Howe it is probable will make an attempt on this city should he fail on this side the Delaware he is ruined if he succeeds our cause is not ruined He stakes all on his side against a part on ours admitting he succeeds the consequence will be that armies from both ends of the continent will march to assist their suffering friends in the middle states for he cannot go every where it is impossible I consider Howe as the greatest enemy the tories have he is bringing a war into their country which, had it not been for him and partly for themselves they had been clear of Should he now be expelled I wish with all the devotion of a Christian that the names of whig and tory may never more be mentioned but should the tories give him encouragement to come or assistance if he come I as sincerely wish that our next year s arms may expel them from the continent and the congress appropriate their possessions to the relief of those who have suffered in well-doing A single successful battle next year will settle the whole America could carry on a two years war by the confiscation of the property of disaffected persons and be made happy by their expulsion Say not that this is revenge call it rather the soft resentment of a suffering people who having no object in view but the *good* of all have staked their *own all* upon a seemingly doubtful event. Yet it is folly to argue against determined hardness eloquence may strike the air and the language of sorrow draw forth the tear of compassion but nothing can reach the heart that is steeled with prejudice

Quitting this class of men I turn with the warm ardor of a friend to those who have nobly stood and are yet determined to stand the matter out I call not upon a few but upon all not on *this* state or *that* state but on *every* state up and help us lay your shoulders to the wheel better have too much force than too little when so great an object is at stake Let it be told to the future world that in the depth of winter when nothing but hope and virtue could survive that the city and the country alarmed at one common danger came forth to meet and to repulse it. Say not that thousands are gone turn out your tens of thousands throw not the burden of the day upon Providence but *show y u f th by you wo ks* that God may bless you It matters not where you live or what rank of life you hold the evil or the blessing will reach you all The far and the near the home counties and the back the rich and the poor will suffer or rejoice alike The heart that

not be afraid to go with a hundred whigs against a thousand tories were they to attempt to get into arms Every tory is a coward for servile slavish self interested fear is the founda tion of toryism and a man under such influence though he may be cruel never can be brave

But before the line of irrecoverable separation be drawn between us let us reason the matter together your conduct is an invitation to the enemy yet not one in a thousand of you has heart enough to join him Howe is as much deceived by you as the American cause is injured by you He expects you will all take up arms and flock to his standard with muskets on your shoulders Your opinions are of no use to him unless you support him personally for tis soldiers and not tories that he wants

I once felt all that kind of anger which a man ought to feel against the mean principles that are held by the tories a noted one who kept a tavern at Amboy was standing at his door with as pretty a child in his hand about eight or nine years old as I ever saw and after speaking his mind as freely as he thought was prudent finished with this unfatherly ex pression *Well! give me peace in my day* Not a man lives on the continent but fully believes that a separation must some time or other finally take place and a generous parent should have said *If there must be trouble let it be in my day that my child may have peace* and this single reflection well ap plied is sufficient to awaken every man to duty Not a place upon earth might be so happy as America Her situation is re mote from all the wrangling world and she has nothing to do *but to trade with them A man can easily distinguish in himself* between temper and principle and I am as confident as I am that God gove ns the world that America will never be happy till she gets clear of foreign dominion Wars without ceasing will break out till that period arrives and the continent must in the end be conqueror for though the flame of liberty may sometimes cease to shine the coal can never expire

America did not nor does not want force but she wanted a proper application of that force Wisdom is not the purchase of a day and it is no wonder that we should err at the first set ting off From an excess of tenderness we were unwilling to raise an army and trusted our cause o the temporary defence of a well meaning militia A summer s experience has now taught us better yet *with those troops while they were col lected* we were able to set bounds to the progress of the enemy and thank God! *they are again assembling* I always

the Indians who are all armed this perhaps is what some tories would not be sorry for Were the home counties to deliver up their arms, they would be exposed to the resentment of the back counties who would then have it in their power to chastise their defection at pleasure And were any one state to give up its arms *that* state must be garrisoned by all Howe s army of Britons and Hessians to preserve it from the anger of the rest. Mutual fear is the principal link in the chain of mutual love and woe be to that state that breaks the compact. Howe is mercifully inviting you to barbarous destruction and men must be either rogues or fools that will not see it.

I dwell not upon the powers of imagination I bring reason to your ears and in language as plain as A,B C, hold up truth to your eyes.

I thank God that I fear not. I see no real cause for fear I know our situation well and can see the way out of it. While our army was collected Howe dared not risk a battle and it is no credit to him that he decamped from the White Plains and waited a mean opportunity to ravage the defenceless Jerseys but it is great credit to us that, with a handful of men, we sustained an orderly retreat for near an hundred miles brought off our ammunition all our field pieces the greatest part of our stores and had four rivers to pass None can say that our retreat was precipitate for we were near three weeks in performing it that the country might have time to come in Twice we marched back to meet the enemy and remained out till dark. The sign of fear was not seen in our camp and had not some of the cowardly and disaffected inhabitants spread false alarms through the country the Jerseys had never been ravaged Once more we are again collected and collecting our new army at both ends of the continent is recruiting fast, and we shall be able to open the next campaign with sixty thousand men well armed and clothed This is our situation and who will may know it By perseverance and fortitude we have the prospect of a glorious issue by cowardice and submission, the sad choice of a variety of evils—a ravaged country—a depopulated city—habitations without safety and slavery without hope—our homes turned into barracks and bawdy houses for Hessians and a future race to provide for whose fathers we shall doubt of Look on this picture and weep over it! and if there yet remains one thoughtless wretch who believes it not, let him suffer it unlamented

December 23 1776

COMMON SENSE

feels not r ow is dead the blood of his children will curse his cowardice who shrinks back at a time when a little might have saved the whole and made *them* happy I love the man that can smile in trouble that can gather strength from distress and grow brave by reflection 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink but he whose heart is firm and whose conscience approves his conduct will pursue his principles unto death My own line of reasoning is to myself as straight and clear as a ray of light Not all the treasures of the world so far as I believe could have induced me to support an offensive war for I think it murder but if a thief breaks into my house burns and destroys my property and kills or threatens to kill me or those *that are in it* and to *bind me in all cases whatsoever* to his absolute will am I to suffer it? What signifies it to me whether he who does it is a king or a common man my countryman or *not my countryman whether it be done by an individual vil* lain or an army of them? If we reason to the root of things we shall find no difference neither can any just cause be assigned why we should punish in the one case and pardon in the other Let them call me rebel and welcome I feel no concern from it but I should suffer the misery of devils were I to make a whore of my soul by swearing allegiance to one whose charac ter is that of a sottish stupid stubborn worthless brutish man I conceive likewise a horrid idea in receiving mercy from a being who at the last day shall be shrieking to the rocks and mountains to cover him and fleeing with terror from the or phan the widow and the slain of America

There are cases which cannot be overdone by language and *this is one There are persons too who see not the* full extent of the evil which threatens them they solace themselves with hopes that the enemy if they succeed will be merciful It is the madness of olly to expect mercy from those who have refused to do justice and even mercy where conquest is the object is only a trick of war the cunning of the fox is as mur derous as the violence of the wolf and we ought to guard equally against both Howe s first ol ct is partly by threats and partly by promises to terrify or seduce the people to de liver up their arms and receive mercy The ministry recom mended the same *plan to Gage* and *this is what the tories* call making their peace *a peace which passeth all understanding indeed!* A peace which would be the immediate forerunner of a *worse ruin* than any we have yet thought of Ye men of Pennsylvania do reason upon these things! Were the back counties to give up their arms they would fall an easy prey to

The subject speaks its own importance comprehending in its consequences nothing less than the existence of the UNION the safety and welfare of the parts of which it is composed the fate of an empire in many respects the most interesting in the world. It has been frequently remarked that it seems to have been reserved to the people of this country by their conduct and example to decide the important question whether societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force If there be any truth in the remark the crisis at which we are arrived may with propriety be regarded as the era in which that decision is to be made and a wrong election of the part we shall act may in this view deserve to be considered as the general misfortune of mankind.

This idea will add the inducements of philanthropy to those of patriotism, to heighten the solicitude which all considerate and good men must feel for the event. Happy will it be if our choice should be directed by a judicious estimate of our true interests unperplexed and unbiased by considerations not connected with the public good But this is a thing more ardently to be wished than seriously to be expected The plan offered to our deliberations affects too many particular interests innovates upon too many local institutions, not to involve in its discussion a variety of objects foreign to its merits and of views passions and prejudices little favourable to the discovery of truth

Among the most formidable of the obstacles which the new Constitution will have to encounter may readily be distinguished the obvious interest of a certain class of men in every State to resist all changes which may hazard a diminution of the power emolument and consequence of the offices they hold under the State establishments and the perverted ambition of another class of men who will either hope to aggrandise themselves by the confusions of their country or will flatter themselves with fairer prospects of elevation from the subdivision of the empire into several partial confederacies than from its union under one government.

It is not, however my design to dwell upon observations of this nature I am well aware that it would be disingenuous to resolve indiscriminately the opposition of any set of men (merely because their situations might subject them to suspicion) into interested or ambitious views Candour will oblige us to admit that even such men may be actuated by upright

AFTER THE REVOLUTION had been won a decade of theories discussions decisions and actions culminated in the Constitutional Convention held at Philadelphia in 1787 *The Federalist* is a series of eighty five essays first published in the New York press during 1787 88 written for the purpose of persuading the people of the state of New York to ratify the new federal Constitution The papers (signed Publius) were produced by three men John Jay James Madison and Alexander Hamilton the latter being planner of the series and author of most of the articles Alexander Hamilton (1757 1804) was born in the British West Indies the illegitimate son of James Hamilton and Rachel Fawcett Levine When the boy was eleven his mother died and his father disappeared The lad became a clerk in a general store Later his aunts arranged for him to go to New York At sixteen he entered King s College but the Revolution intervened to prevent his graduation In 1777 he became secretary and aide-de-camp to Washington After the war he studied law and was admitted to the bar He was a member of the first Continental Congress of the New York legislature and of the Constitutional Convention When Washington became President, Hamilton was chosen as Secretary of the Treasury Political activities and personal animosities brought him into conflict with many leaders and public disgrace smeared him in 1797 when he was baselessly accused of dishonesty He emerged with his influence and standing unimpaired Although by this time he had retired from public life to law practice and the founding of the *New Yo k Evening Post* his continuing political activities were such that he was forced to accept a challenge from his long time opponent Aaron Burr Burr s first bullet struck Hamilton s liver the next day he died The following selection is the introductory essay of *The Federalist* series

The Union and Its New Constitution

To the People of the State of New York

After an unequivocal experience of the inefficiency of the subsisting federal government you are called upon to deliberate on a new Constitution for the United States of America.

The subject speaks its own importance comprehending in its consequences nothing less than the exist.nce of the UNION the safety and welfare of the parts of which it is composed the fate of an empire in many respects the most interesting in the world It has been frequently remarked that it seems to have been reserved to the people of this country by their conduct and example to decide the important question whether societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and cho. e or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force If there be any truth in the remark the crisis at which we are arrived may with propriety be regarded as the era in which that decision is to be made and a wrong election of the part we shall act may in this view deserve to be considered as the general misfortune of mankind.

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It is not, however my design to dwell upon observations of this nature. I am well aware that it would be disingenuous to resolve indiscriminately the opposition of any set of men (merely because their situations might subject them to suspicion) into interested or ambitious views. Candour will obl ge us to admit that even su h men may be actuated by upright

intentions and it cannot be doubted that much of the opposition which has made its appearance or may hereafter make its appearance will spring from sources blameless at least if not respectable—the honest errors of minds led astray by preconceived jealousies and fears So numerous indeed and so powerful are the causes which serve to give a false bias to the judgment that we upon many occasions see wise and good men on the wrong as well as on the right side of questions of the first magnitude to society This circumstance if duly attended to would furnish a lesson of moderation to those who are ever so much persuaded of their being in the right in any controversy And a further reason for caution in this respect might be drawn from the reflection that we are not always sure that those who advocate the truth are influenced by purer principles than their antagonists Ambition avarice personal animosity party opposition and many other motives not more laudable than these are apt to operate as well upon those who support as those who oppose the right side of a question Were there not even these inducements to moderation nothing could be more ill judged than that intolerant spirit which has at all times characterised political parties For in politics as in religion it is equally absurd to aim at making proselytes by fire and sword Heresies in either can rarely be cured by persecution

And yet however just these sentiments will be allowed to be we have already sufficient indications that it will happen in this as in all former cases of great national discussion A torrent of angry and malignant passions will be let loose To judge from the conduct of the opposite parties we shall be led to conclude that they will mutually hope to evince the justness of their opinions and to increase the number of their converts by the loudness of their declamations and the bitterness of their invectives An enlightened zeal for the energy and efficiency of government will be stigmatised as the offspring of a temper fond of despotic power and hostile to the principles of liberty An over scrupulous jealousy of danger to the rights of the people which is more commonly the fault of the head than of the heart will be represented as mere pretence and artifice the stale bait for popularity at the expense of the public good It will be forgotten on the one hand that jealousy is the usual concomitant of love and that the noble enthusiasm of liberty is apt to be infected with a spirit of narrow and illiberal distrust On the other hand it will be equally forgotten

that the vigour of government is essential to the security of liberty that, in the contemplation of a sound and well informed judgment, their interest can never be separated and that a dangerous ambition more often lurks behind the specious mask of zeal for the rights of the people than under the forbidding appearance of zeal for the firmness and efficiency of government. History will teach us that the former has been found a much more certain road to the introduction of despotism than the latter and that of those men who have overturned the liberties of republics the greatest number have begun their career by paying an obsequious court to the people commencing demagogues and ending tyrants

In the course of the preceding observations I have had an eye my fellow-citizens to putting you upon your guard against all attempts from whatever quarter to influence your decision in a matter of the utmost moment to your welfare by any impressions other than those which may result from the evidence of truth. You will no doubt at the same time have collected from the general scope of them that they proceed from a source not unfriendly to the new Constitution Yes my countrymen I own to you that, after having given it an attentive consideration, I am clearly of opinion it is your interest to adopt it I am convinced that this is the safest course for your liberty your dignity and your happiness I affect not reserves which I do not feel I will not amuse you with an appearance of deliberation when I have decided I frankly acknowledge to you my convictions and I will freely lay before you the reasons on which they are founded The consciousness of good intentions disdains ambiguity I shall not however multiply professions on this head My motives must remain in the depository of my own breast My arguments will be open to all and may be judged of by all They shall at least be offered in a spirit which will not disgrace the cause of truth

I propose in a series of papers to discuss the following interesting particulars —*The utility of the UNION to your political prosperity—The insufficiency of the present Confederation to preserve that Union—The necessity of a government at least equally energetic with the one proposed to the attainment of this object—The conformity of the proposed Constitution to the true principles of republican government—Its analogy to your own State constitution—and lastly The additional security which its adoption will afford to the preservation of that species of government to liberty and to property*

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 1882) monumental figure in American literature was born in Boston After graduation as class poet, from Harvard at the age of eighteen he taught school for more than three unhappy years before studying for the ministry He preached at a Unitarian church in Boston for a few years but withdrew from his church affiliations because of disagreements on doctrinal questions From 1834 Emerson's life was spent in Concord where he became the center of the country's most potent mid-century group of intellectuals—Brownson Alcott, Thoreau Jones Very Channing Hawthorne Margaret Fuller *The Dial* the short lived quarterly magazine for literature philosophy and religion For two years he edited As a stimulating public lecturer participating with eloquent optimism in discussions of national issues he established a reputation that became international. As poet (*Concord Hymn Good bye Give All to Love*) or as prime mover of Concord's Transcendental Club—whose members viewed the world of phenomena as a sort of symbol of the inner life and emphasized individual freedom and self reliance—Emerson's high place is secure His crowning achievement, however is his series of volumes of essays His first book, *Nature* was published in 1836 *Essays First Series* appeared in 1841 Emerson thrice visited England first in 1833 when he established a lifelong friendship with Carlyle Shortly after his return from his second visit to England he delivered, in Boston in 1848 the series of lectures published seven years later as *English Traits* The accompanying selection is from this book.

Literature

A strong common sense which it is not easy to unseat or disturb marks the English mind for a thousand years a rude strength newly applied to thought as of sailors and soldiers who had lately learned to read They have no fancy and never are surprised into a covert or witty word such as pleased the Athenians and Italians and was convertible into a fable not long after but they delight in strong earthy expression not mistakable coarsely true to the human body and though spoken among princes equally fit and welcome to the mob

of intellect, makes the very genius of Shakespeare and Milton When it reaches the pure element it treads the clouds as securely as the adamant. Even in its elevations materialistic its poetry is common sense inspired or iron raised to white heat.

The marriage of the two qualities is in their speech It is a tacit rule of the language to make the frame or skeleton of Saxon words and when elevation or ornament is sought, to interweave Roman but sparingly nor is a sentence made of Roman words alone without loss of strength The children and laborers use the Saxon unmixed. The Latin unmixed is abandoned to the colleges and Parliament. Mixture is a secret of the English island and in their dialect, the male principle is the Saxon the female the Latin and they are combined in every discourse A good writer if he has indulged in a Roman roundness makes haste to chasten and nerve his period by English monosyllables

When the Gothic nations came into Europe they found it lighted with the sun and moon of Hebrew and of Greek genius The tablets of their brain long kept in the dark were finely sensible to the double glory To the images from this twin source (of Christianity and art) the mind became fruitful as by the incubation of the Holy Ghost. The English mind flowered in every faculty The common-sense was surprised and inspired For two centuries England was philosophic religious poetic The mental furniture seemed of larger scale the memory capacious like the storehouse of the rains the ardor and endurance of study the boldness and facility of their mental construction their fancy and imagination and easy spanning of vast distances of thought the enterprise or accosting of new subjects and generally the easy exertion of power astonish, like the legendary feats of Guy of Warwick The union of Saxon precision and oriental soaring of which Shakespeare is the perfect example is shared in less degree by the writers of two centuries I find not only the great masters out of all rivalry and reach but the whole writing of the time charged with a masculine force and freedom.

There is a hygienic simpleness rough vigor and closeness to the matter in hand even in the second and third class of writers and, I think in the common style of the people as one finds it in the citation of wills letters and public documents in proverbs and forms of speech. The more hearty and sturdy expression may indicate that the savageness of the Norseman was not all gone. Their dynamic brains hurled

Where that goes is poetry health and progress The rules of its genesis or its diffusion are not known That knowledge if we had it, would supersede all we call science of the mind It seems an affair of race or of meta-chemistry the vital point being—how far the sense of unity or instinct of seeking resemblances predominated. For wherever the mind takes a step it is to put itself at one with a larger class discerned beyond the lesser class with which it has been conversant. Hence all poetry and all affirmative action comes

Bacon in the structure of his mind held of the analogists of the idealists or (as we popularly say naming from the best example) Platonists Whoever discredits analogy and requires heaps of facts before any theories can be attempted has no poetic power and nothing original or beautiful will be produced by him Locke is as surely the influx of decomposition and of prose as Bacon and the Platonists of growth The Platonic is the poetic tendency the so-called scientific is the negative and poisonous 'Tis quite certain that Spenser Burns Byron and Wordsworth will be Platonists and that the dull men will be Lockeists Then politics and commerce will absorb from the educated class men of talents without genius precisely because such have no resistance

Bacon capable of ideas yet devoted to ends required in his map of the mind first of all universality or *prima philosophia* the receptacle for all such profitable observations and axioms as fall not within the compass of any of the special parts of philosophy but are more common and of a higher stage He held this element essential it is never out of mind he never spares rebukes for such as neglect it believing that no perfect discovery can be made in a flat level but you must ascend to a higher science If any man thinketh philosophy and universality to be idle studies he doth not consider that all professions are from thence served and supplied and this I take to be a great cause that has hindered the progression of learning because these fundamental knowledges have been stud ed but in passage He explained himself by giving various quaint examples of the summary or common laws of which each science has its own illustration He complains that he finds this part of learning very deficient the profounder sort of wits drawing a bucket now and then for their own use but the spring head unvisited This was the *dry light* which d d scorch and offend most men s watery natures Plato had signified the same sense when he said All the great arts require a subtle and speculative research into the

Such richness of genius had not existed more than once before. These heights could not be maintained As we find stumps of vast trees in our exhausted soils and have received traditions of their ancient fertility to tillage so history reckons epochs in which the intellect of famed races became effete So it fared with English genius These heights were followed by a meanness, and a descent of the mind into lower levels the loss of wings no high speculation. Locke to whom the meaning of ideas was unknown became the type of philosophy and his "understanding the measure in all nations of the English intellect. His countrymen forsook the lofty sides of Parnassus on which they had once walked with echoing steps and disused the studies once so beloved the powers of thought fell into neglect. The later English want the faculty of Plato and Aristotle of grouping men in natural classes by an insight of general laws so deep that the rule is deduced with equal precision from few subjects or from one as from multitudes of lives Shakespeare is supreme in that, as in all the great mental energies The Germans generalize the English cannot interpret the German mind German science comprehends the English The absence of the faculty in England is shown by the timidity which accumulates mountains of facts as a bad general wants myriads of men and miles of redoubts to compensate the inspirations of courage and conduct.

The English shrink from a generalization "They do not look abroad into universality or they draw only a bucket full at the fountain of the First Philosophy for their occasion and do not go to the springhead. Bacon who said this is almost unique among his countrymen in that faculty at least among the prose-writers Milton who was the stair or high table land to let down the English genius from the summits of Shakespeare used this privilege sometimes in poetry more rarely in prose For a long interval afterwards it is not found. Burke was addicted to generalizing but his was a shorter line as his thoughts have less depth, they have less compass Hume s abstractions are not deep or wise He owes his fame to one keen observation that no copula had been detected between any cause and effect, either in physics or in thought that the term cause and effect was loosely or gratuitously applied to what we know only as consecutive not at all as causal Doctor Johnson s written abstractions have little value the tone of feeling in them makes their chief worth

Mr Hallam, a learned and elegant scholar has written the

avoid ideas and avoid morals He thinks it the distinctive merit of the Baconian philosophy in its triumph over the old Platonic its disentangling the intellect from theories of the all Fair and all-Good, and pinning it down to the making a better sick-chair and a better wine whey for an invalid—this not ironically but in good faith—that, solid advantage " as he calls it, meaning always sensual benefit is the only good. The eminent benefit of astronomy is the better navigation it creates to enable the fruit-ships to bring home their lemons and wine to the London grocer It was a curious result in which the civility and religion of England for a thousand years ends in denying morals and reducing the intellect to a sauce-pan The critic hides his scepticism under the English cant of practical. To convince the reason to touch the con science is romantic pretension. The fine arts fall to the ground. Beauty except as luxurious commodity does not exist It is very certain, I may say in passing that if Lord Bacon had been only the sensualist his critic pretends he would never have acquired the fame which now entitles him to this patron age It is because he had imagination the leisures of the spirit, and basked in an element of contemplation out of all modern English atmospheric gauges that he is impressive to the im aginations of men and has become a potentate not to be ignored. Sir David Brewster sees the high place of Bacon, without finding Newton indebted to him and thinks it a mis take Bacon occupies it by specific gravity or levity not by any feat he did or by any tutoring more or less of Newton, &c but an effect of the same cause which showed itself more pronounced afterwards in Hooke Boyle and Halley

Coleridge a catholic mind, with a hunger for ideas with eyes looking before and after to the highest bards and sages and who wrote and spoke the only high criticism in his time — is one of those who save England from the reproach of no longer possessing the capacity to appreciate what rarest wit the island has yielded. Yet the misfortune of his life his vast attempts but most inadequate performings failing to accom plish any one masterpiece seems to mark the closing of an era. Even in him the traditional Englishman was too strong for the philosopher and he fell into *accommodations* and as Bur e had striven to idealize the English State so Coleridge narrowed his mind in the attempt to reconcile the gothic rule and dogma of the Anglican Church with eternal ideas But for Coleridge and a lurking taciturn minority uttering

were driven by tastes and modes they found in vogue into their several careers So at this moment every ambitious young man studies geology so members of Parliament are made and churchmen.

The bias of Englishmen to practical skill has reacted on the national mind They are incapable of an inutility and respect the five mechanic powers even in their song The voice of their modern muse has a slight hint of the steam whistle and the poem is created as an ornament and finish of their monarchy and by no means as the bird of a new morning which forgets the past world in the full enjoyment of that which is forming They are with difficulty ideal they are the most conditioned men as if having the best conditions they could not bring themselves to forfeit them Every one of them is a thousand years old and lives by his memory and when you say this they accept it as praise

Nothing comes to the book-shops but politics travels statistics tabulation and engineering and even what is called philosophy and letters is mechanical in its structure as if inspiration had ceased as if no vast hope no religion no song of joy no wisdom no analogy existed any more The tone of colleges and of scholars and of literary society has this mortal air I seem to walk on a marble floor where nothing will grow They exert every variety of talent on a lower ground, and may be said to live and act in a sub-mind They have lost all commanding views in literature philosophy and science A good Englishman shuts himself out of three fourths of his mind and confines himself to one fourth He has learning good sense power of labor and logic but a faith in the laws of the mind like that of Archimedes a belief like that of Euler and Kepler that experience must follow and not lead the laws of the mind a devotion to the theory of politics like that of Hooker and Milton, and Harrington the modern English mind repudiates

I fear the same fault lies in their science since they have known how to make it repulsive and bereave nature of its charm —though perhaps the complaint flies wider and the vice attaches to many more than to British physicists The eye of the naturalist must have a scope like nature itself a susceptibility to all impressions alive to the heart as well as to the logic of creation But English science puts humanity to the door It wants the connection which is the test of genius science is false by not being poetic It isolates the reptile

knowledge and the surrender to nature there is the suppression of the imagination the priapism of the senses and the understanding we have the factitious instead of the natural tasteless expense arts of comfort, and the rewarding as an illustrious inventor whosoever will contrive one impediment more to interpose between the man and his objects

Thus poetry is degraded and made ornamental Pope and his school wrote poetry fit to put around frosted cake What did Walter Scott write without stint? a rhymed traveler's guide to Scotland And the libraries of verses they print have this Birmingham character How many volumes of well bred metre we must jingle through before we can be filled taught, renewed! We want the miraculous the beauty which we can manufacture at no mill—can give no account of the beauty of which Chaucer and Chapman had the secret. The poetry of course is low and prosaic only now and then, as in Wordsworth, conscientious or in Byron passional or in Tennyson factitious But if I should count the poets who have contributed to the Bible of existing England sentences of guidance and consolation which are still glowing and effective—how few! Shall I find my heavenly bread in the reigning poets? Where is great design in modern English poetry? The English have lost sight of the fact that poetry exists to speak the spiritual law and that no wealth of description or of fancy is yet essentially new and out of the limits of prose until this condition is reached Therefore the grave old poets like the Greek artists heeded their designs and less considered the finish It was their office to lead to the divine sources out of which all this and much more readily springs and if this religion is in the poetry it raises us to some purpose and we can well afford some staidness, or hardness or want of popular tune in the verses

The exceptional fact of the period is the genius of Wordsworth. He had no master but nature and solitude He wrote a poem says Landor 'without the aid of war His verse is the voice of sanity in a worldly and ambitious age One regrets that his temperament was not more liquid and musical. He has written longer than he was inspired But for the rest, he has no competitor

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Meantime I know that a retrieving power lies in the English race which seems to make any recoil possible in other words, there is at all times a minority of profound minds existing in the nation, capable of appreciating every soaring of intellect and every hint of tendency While the constructive talent seems dwarfed and superficial the criticism is often in the noblest tone and suggests the presence of the invisible gods I can well believe what I have often heard that there are two nations in England but it is not the Poor and the Rich nor is it the Normans and Saxons or the Celt and the Goth. These are each always becoming the other for Robert Owen does not exaggerate the power of circumstance But the two complexions or two styles of mind—the perceptive class and the practical finality class—are ever in counter poise interacting mutually one in hopeless minorities the other in huge masses one studious contemplative experi menting the other the ungrateful pupil scornful of the source whilst availing itself of the knowledge for gain these two nations, of genius and of animal force though the first con sist of only a dozen souls and the second of twenty millions forever by their discord and their accord yield the power of the English State

and talked about in public as "Teacups ? No so far as we give to the community some records of the talks at our table our thoughts become publi property but the sacred person ality of every Teacup must be properly respected If any won d r at the presence of one of our number whose eccentrici ties might seem to render him an undesirable associate of the company he should remember that some people may have relatives whom they feel bound to keep their eye on besides the cracked Teacup brings out the ring of the sound ones as nothing else does Remember also that the soundest teacup does not always hold the best tea nor the cracked teacup the worst.

This is a hint to the reader who is not expected to be too curious about the individual Teacups constituting our unor ganized association.

The Dictator Discourses

I have been reading Balzac s *Peau de Chagrin* You have all read the story I hope for it is the first of his wonderful roman ces which fixed th eyes of the reading world upon him and it is a most fascinating if somewhat fantastic tale A young man becomes the possessor of a certain magic skin, the peculiarity of *which is that*, while it gratifies every wish *formed by its* possessor it shrinks in all its d mensions each time that a wish is gratified The young man makes every effort to ascertain the cause of its shrinking invokes the aid of the physicist, the chemist, the studen of natur l history but all in vain He draws a red line around it. That same day he indulges a long ing for a certain object The next morning there is a little interval between the red line and the skin close to whi h it was traced So always so inevitably As he lives on satisfying one desire one passion after another the process of shrinking continues A mortal disease sets in which keeps pace with the shrinking skin and his life and his talisman come to an end together

One would say that such a piece of integument was hardly a desirable possess on And yet, how many of us have at this very moment a *p au de hagri* of our own diminishing with every costly wi h indulged and incapable like the magical one of the story of being arrested n its progress!

Need I say that I refer to those *oup n bond* issued in the days of e ght and ten per cent interest, and gradually narrow

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I were a man I had rather have done something worth telling of than make verses about what other people had done"

You agree with Alexander the Great said the Professor You would prefer the fame of Achilles to that of Homer who told the story of his wrath and its direful consequences I am afraid that I should hardly agree with you. Achilles was little better than a Choctaw brave I won t quote Horace s line which characterizes him so admirably for I will take it for granted that you all know it. He was a gentleman —so is a first-class Indian —a very noble gentleman in point of courage lofty bearing courtesy but an unsoaped ill-clad turbulent, high-tempered young fellow looked up to by his crowd very much as the champion of the heavy weights is looked up to by his gang of blackguards Alexander himself was not much better —a foolish fiery young madcap How often is he mentioned except as a warning? His best record is that he served to point a moral as Macedonia s madman He made a figure it is true in Dryden s great Ode but what kind of a figure? He got drunk,—in very bad company too —and then turned fire-bug He had one redeeming point —he did value his Homer and slept with the Iliad under his pillow A poet like Homer seems to me worth a dozen such fellows as Achilles and Alexander

Homer is all very well for those that can read him" said Number Seven, but the fellows that tag verses together nowadays are mostly fools That s my opinion I wrote some verses once myself but I had been sick and was very weak hadn t strength enough to write in prose I suppose

This aggressive remark caused a little stir at our teatable For you must know if I have not told you already there are suspicions that we have more than one poet at our table I have already confessed that I do myself indulge in verse now and then and have given my readers a specimen of my work in that line But there is so much difference of character in the verses which are produced at our table without any signature that I feel quite sure there are at least two or three other contributors besides myself There is a tall old fashioned silver urn a sugar bowl of the period of the Empire in which the poems sent to be read are placed by unseen hands When the proper moment arrives I lift the cover of the urn and take out any manuscript it may contain If conversation is going on and the company are in a talking mood I replace the manuscript or manuscripts clap on the cover and wait until there is a moment s quiet before taking it off again I might

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straight into the waste basket. To write poetry" was an art and mystery in which only a few noted men and a woman or two were experts

When Potter the ventriloquist" the predecessor of the well remembered Signor Blitz, went round giving his enter tainments there was something unexplained uncanny almost awful and beyond dispute marvellous in his performances Those watches that disappeared and came back to their own ers those endless supplies of treasures from empty hats and especially those crawling eggs that travelled all over the magician s person sent many a child home thinking that Mr Potter must have ghostly assistants and raised grave doubts in the minds of 'professors that is members of the church whether they had not compromi ed their characters by being seen at such an unhallowed exhibition Nowadays a clever boy who has made a study of parlor magic can do many of those tricks almost as well as the great sorcerer himself How simple it all seems when we have seen the mechanism of the deception!

It is just so with writing in verse It was not understood that everybody can learn to *make poetry* just as they can learn the more difficult tricks of juggling M Jourdain s discovery that he had been speaking and writing prose all his life is nothing to that of the man who finds out in middle life or even later that he might have been writing poetry all his days if he had only known how perfectly easy and simple it is Not every body it is tru has a sufficiently good ear a sufficient knowl edge of rhymes and capacity for handling them to be what is called a poet. I doubt whether more than nine out of ten in the average have that combination of gifts required for the writing of readable verse

This last expression of opinion created a sensation among The Teacups They looked puzzled for a minute One whis pered to the next Teacup More than nine out of ten! I should think that was a pretty liberal allowance"

Yes I continued perhaps ninety nine in a hundred would come nearer to the mark I have sometimes thought I might consider it worth while to set up a school for instruction in the art *Poetry taught in twelve lessons* Congenital idiocy is no disqualification Anybody can write poetry It is a most unenviable d stinction to have published a thin volume of verse whi h nobody wanted nobody buys nobody reads no-body cares for except the author who cries over its pathos

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words. You cannot make any use of *cars* I will suppose you have no occasion to talk about *scars*; "the red planet *Mars*" has been used already; Dibdin has said enough about the gallant *tars*: what is there left for you but *bars*? So you give up your trains of thought, capitulate to necessity, and manage to lug in some kind of allusion, in place or out of place, which will allow you to make use of *bars*. Can there be imagined a more certain process for breaking up all continuity of thought, for taking out all the vigor, all the virility, which belongs to natural prose as the vehicle of strong thought, than this miserable subjugation of intellect to the clink of well or ill matched syllables? I think you will smile if I tell you of an idea I have had about teaching the art of writing poems to the half witted children at the Idiot Asylum. The trick of rhyming cannot be more usefully employed than in furnishing a pleasant amusement to the poor feeble minded children. I should feel that I was well employed in getting up a Primer for the pupils of the Asylum and other young persons who are incapable of serious thought and connected expression. I would start in the simplest way, thus —

When darkness veils the evening
I love to lose my weary

The pupil begins by supplying the missing words which most children who are able to keep out of fire and water can accomplish after a certain number of trials. When the poet that is to be has got so as to perform this task easily, a skeleton verse in which two or three words of each line are omitted is given the child to fill up. By and by the more difficult forms of metre are outlined, until at length a feeble minded child can make out a sonnet completely equipped with its four pairs of rhymes in the first section and its three pairs in the second part.

Number Seven interrupted my discourse somewhat abruptly as is his wont, for we grant him a license in virtue of his eccentricity which we should hardly expect to be claimed by a perfectly sound Teacup.

"That's the way — that's the way!" exclaimed he. "It's just the same thing as my plan for teaching drawing."

Some curiosity was shown among The Teacups to know what the queer creature had got into his head, and Number Five asked him in her irresistible tones if he wouldn't oblige us by telling us all about it.

pupil will learn to get the outline of a human figure in ten lessons, the *model* coming five hundred feet nearer each time A dull one may require fifty the model beginning a mile off or more, and coming a hundred feet nearer at each move"

The company were amused by all this but could not help seeing that there was a certain pra^tical possibility about the scheme Our *two Annexes* as we call them appeared to be interested in the project or fancy or whim or whatever the older heads might consider it I guess I ll try it said the American Annex. Quite so answered the *English* Annex Why the first girl guessed about her own intentions it is hard to say What Quite so referred to it would not be easy to determine But these two expressions would decide the na tionality of our two young ladies if we met them on the top of the great Pyramid.

I was very glad that Number Seven had interrupted me In fact it is *a good* thing once in a while to break in upon the monotony of a steady talker at a dinner table tea table or any other place of social converse The best talker is liable to be come the most formidable of bores It is a peculiarity of the bore that he is the last person to find himself out Many a terebrant I have known who in that capacity to borrow a line from Coleridge

Was great, nor knew how great he was

A line, by the way which as I have remarked has in it a germ like that famous He builded better than he knew of Emerson

There was a sl ght lull in the conversation. The Mistress who keeps an eye on the course of things and feared that one of those *pani s l nc s* was im pend ng in which everybody wants to say something and does not know just what to say begged me to go on with my remarks about the manufacture of *poetry*

You use the right term, madam I said The manufacture of that article has become an extensive and therefore an im portant branch of industry One must be an editor which I am not, or a literary confidant of a wide circle *of* correspond ents which I am to hav any *idea* of the enormous output of verse wh ch s char cte istic of our time There are many curious facts connected with this phenomenon Educated peo ple—yes and many who are not educated—have discovered that rhymes are not the private property of a few noted writers

blocking my literary pathway so that I can hardly find my daily papers.

What is the meaning of this rush into rhyming of such a multitude of people of all ages from the infant phenomenon to the oldest inhabitant?

Many of my young correspondents have told me in so many words I want to be famous. Now it is true that of all the short cuts to fame in time of peace there is none shorter than the road paved with rhymes Byron woke up one morning and found himself famous Still more notably did Rouget de l Isle fill the air of France nay the whole atmosphere of freedom all the world over with his name wafted on the wings of the Marseillaise the work of a single night. But if by fame the aspirant means having his name brought before and kept before the public, there is a much cheaper way of acquiring that kind of notoriety Have your portrait taken as a Won derful Cure of a Desperate Disease given up by all the Doc tors. You will get a fair likeness of yourself and a partial biographical notice and have the satisfaction if not of promoting the welfare of the community at least that of advancing the financial interests of the benefactor whose enterprise has given you your coveted notoriety If a man wants to be famous he had much better try the advertising doctor than the terrible editor whose waste basket is a maw which is as insatiable as the temporary stomach of Jack the Giant killer

You must not talk so said Number Five I know you don t mean any wrong to the true poets but you might be thought to hold them cheap whereas you value the gift in others —in yourself too I rather think. There are a great many women —and some men —who write in verse from a natural instinct which leads them to that form of expression If you could peep into the portfolio of all the cultivated women among your acquaintances you would be surprised, I believe to see how many of them trust their thoughts and feelings to verse which they never think of publishing and much of which never meets any eyes but their own Don t be cruel to the sensitive natures who find a music in the harmonies of rhythm and rhyme which soothes their own souls if it reaches no farther

I was glad that Number Five spoke up as she did. Her generous instinct came to the rescue of the poor poets just at the right moment. Not that I meant to deal roughly *with them* but the poets I have been forced into relation with have

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that posterity may not resuscitate these seemingly dead poems, and give their author the immortality for which he longed and I bored? It is not every poet who is at once appreciated. Some will tell you that the best poets never are. Who can say that you, dear unappreciated brother or sister, are not one of those whom it is left for after times to discover among the wrecks of the past, and hold up to the admiration of the world?

I have not thought it necessary to put in all the interpellations as the French call them, which broke the course of this somewhat extended series of remarks but the comments of some of The Teacups helped me to shape certain additional observations and may seem to the reader as of more significance than what I had been saying

Number Seven saw nothing but the folly and weakness of the rhyming cranks as he called them He thought the fellow that I had described as blubbering over his still born poems would have been better occupied in earning his living in some honest way or other He knew one chap that published a volume of verses and let his wife bring up the wood for the fire by which he was writing A fellow says "I am a poet!" and he thinks himself different from common folks He ought to be excused from military service He might be killed and the world would lose the inestimable products of his genius "I believe some of em think said Number Seven "that they ought not to be called upon to pay their taxes and their bills for household expenses like the rest of us"

If they would only study and take to heart Horace's Ars Poetica said the Professor it would be a great benefit to them and to the world at large I would not advise you to follow him too literally of course for as you will see the changes that have taken place since his time would make some of his precepts useless and some dangerous but the spirit of them is always instructive This is the way somewhat modernized and accompanied by my running commentary in which he counsels a young poet —

Don't try to write poetry my boy when you are not in the mood for doing it —when it goes against the grain You are a fellow of sense —you understand all that.

If you have written anything which you think well of show it to Mr ——— the well known critic to "the governor" as you call him —your honored father and to me

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ne brought before me scores and hundreds of letters in hich every shade of the great passion has been represented What has most struck me in these amatory correspondences as been their remarkable sameness It seems as if writing love etters reduced all sorts of people to the same level I don't remember whether Lord Bacon has left us anything in that line —unless indeed, he wrote Romeo and Juliet and the Sonnets but if he has I don t believe they differ so very much from those of his valet or his groom to their respective lady loves It is always My darling! my darling! The words of en dearment are the only ones the lover wants to employ and he finds the vocabulary too limited for his vast desires So his letters are apt to be rather tedious except to the personage to whom they are addressed As to poetry it is very common to find it in love letters especially in those that have no love in them The etters of bigamists and polygamists are rich in poetical extracts Occasionally an original spurt in rhyme adds variety to an otherwise monotonous performance. I don t think there is much passion in men s poetry addressed to women I agree with The Dictator that poetry is little more than the ashes of pass on st ll it may show that the flame has had its sweep where you find it unless indeed it is shoveled in from another man s fireplace

"What do you say to the love poetry of women? asked the Professor D d ever passion heat words to incandescence as it did those of Sappho?

The Counsellor turned —not to Number Five as he ought to have done accord ng to my programme but to the Mistress

Madam he sa d your sex is adorable in many ways but in the *abandon* of a genuine love letter it is incomparable I have seen a string of women s love letters in which the crea ture enlaced herself about the object of her worship as that South American parasite which clasps the tree to which it has atta hed itself begins with a slender succulent network feeds on the trunk spreads its fingers out to hold firmly to one bran h after another thickens hardens stretches in every direction following the boughs and at length gets strong enough to hold in its murderous arms high up in the air the stump and shaft of the once sturdy growth that was its support and subs stence

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HENRY DAVID THOREAU

HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1817-1862) was the only one of that famous Concord group of mid-century intellectuals named in the account of Emerson's life to be born in this small Massachusetts village. Except for the four unsocial years at Harvard, where he was graduated in 1837, and for those infrequent and brief trips memorialized in his writings (*A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, *Excursions*, *The Maine Woods*, *Cape Cod* and *A Yankee in Canada*) his entire life was spent in Concord. With his brother he taught in their own school for a couple of years, an occupation from which he escaped at the death of his brother. He joined the Transcendental Club and became a frequent contributor to the journal of this group, the newly founded *Dial*. At various times he supported himself at the family trade of pencil making. During two periods (1841-43 and 1847-48) he lived in the Emerson household. For the two-year stretch from July 4, 1845, to September 6, 1847, Thoreau, rebel and lover of nature and of solitude, retired to solitary living in a cabin beside Walden Pond. The account of this stay was one of the great books of the century—*Walden, or Life in the Woods*, which appeared in 1854. Only two books appeared during his lifetime, but from essays in various magazines, unpublished manuscripts, verse, letters, and journals his works were extended after his death to a collected edition of twenty volumes. The following essay first appeared in the *Aesthetic Papers* of Elizabeth P. Peabody (Boston, 1849), and is sometimes printed under the title *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*.

Resistance to Civil Government

I HEARTILY accept the motto,—"That government is best which governs least;" and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe,—"That government is best which governs not at all;" and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient. The [illegible] which have been brought against a standing army

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After all the practical reason why when the power is once in the hands of the people a majority are permitted and for a long period continue to rule is not because they are most likely to be in the right nor because this seems fairest to the minority but because they are physically the strongest But a government in which the majority rule in all cases cannot be based on justice even as far as men understand it Can there not be a government in which majorities do not virtually decide right and wrong but conscience?—in which majorities decide only those questions to which the rule of expediency is applicable? Must the citizen ever for a moment or in the least degree resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience then? I think that we should be men first and subjects afterward It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law so much as for the right The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right It is truly enough said that a corporation has no conscience but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation *with* a conscience Law never made men a whit more just and by means of their respect for it even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is that you may see a file of soldiers colonel captain corporal privates powder monkeys and all marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars against their wills aye against their common sense and consciences which makes it very steep marching indeed and produces a palpitation of the heart. They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned they are all peaceably inclined Now what are they? Men at all? or small moveable forts and magazines at the service of some unscrupulous man in power? Visit the Navy Yard and behold a marine such a man as an American government can make or such as it can make a man with its black arts a mere shadow and reminiscence of humanity a man la d out alive and standing and already as one may say buri d under arms with funeral accompaniments though it may be

Not drum w h a d nor a funeral note
A h s corpse to the r mparts we hurried
Not s ld d scha ged h s far well shot
O e the gra e where our hero we buried

The *mas* of *men serve the State* thus not as men mainly but as machines w th their bodies They are the standing

have its machine and oppression and robbery are organized I say let us not have such a machine any longer In other words when a sixth of the population of a nation which has undertaken to be the *refuge* of liberty are slaves and a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army and subjected to military law I think that it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize What makes *this* duty the more urgent is the fact, that the country so overrun is not our own but ours is the invading army

Paley *a common* authority with many on moral questions in his chapter on th Duty of Submission to Civil Government, resolves all civil obligation into expediency and he proceeds to say that so *long as the* interest of the whole society requires it that is so long as the established government cannot be resisted or changed without public inconveniency it is the will of God that *the established* government be obeyed and no longer — This principle being admitted the justice of every particular case of resistance is reduced to a computation of the quantity of the dang r and grievance on the one side and of the probability and expense of redressing it on the other Of this he says every *man shall* judge for himself But Paley appears never to have contemplated those cases to which the rule of expedi ncy does not apply in which a people as well as an individual must do justice cost what it may If I have unju tly wrested a plank from a drowning man I must restore it to him though I drown myself This according to Paley would be i onvenient But he that would save his life *in su* h a case shall lose it This people must cease to hold slaves and to make war on Mexico though it cost them their existence as a people

In their practice nations agree with Paley but does any one think that Massachusetts does exactly what is right at the present crisis?

> A drab of sta e a cloth-o s'l er lut,
> To ha e her train borne up and h soul trail in the dirt."

Practically speaking, the opponents to a reform in Massachusetts are not a hundred thou and politic ans at the South but a hundred thousand merchants and farmers here who are more interested in commerce and agriculture *than* they are in humanity *and are* not prepared to do justice to the slave and to Mexico *cost what it may* I quarrel not with far-off foes but with those who near at home co-operate with, and do

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chiefly of editors and men who are politicians by profession but I think what is it to any independent intelligent and respectable man what decision they may come to shall we not have the advantage of his wisdom and honesty nevertheless? Can we not count upon some independent votes? Are there not many individuals in the country who do not attend conventions? But no I find that the respectable man so called has immediately drifted from his position and despairs of his country when his country has more reason to despair of him He forthwith adopts one of the candidates thus selected as the only *available* one thus proving that he is himself *available* for any purposes of the demagogue His vote is of no more worth than that of any unprincipled foreigner or hireling native who may have been bought Oh for a man who is a *man* and, as my neighbor says has a bone in his back which you cannot pass your hand through! Our statistics are at fault the population has been returned too large How many *men* are there to a square thousand miles in this country? Hardly one. Does not America offer any inducement for men to settle here? The American has dwindled into an Odd Fellow — one who may be known by the development of his organ of gregariousness and a manifest lack of intellect and cheerful self reliance whose first and chief concern on coming into the world is to see that the alms houses are in good repair and, before yet he has lawfully donned the virile garb to collect a fund for the support of the widows and orphans that may be who in short ventures to live only by the aid of the mutual insurance company which has promised to bury him decently

It is not a man s duty as a matter of course to devote himself to the eradication of any even the most enormous wrong he may st ll properly have other concerns to engage him but it is his duty at least to wash h s hands of it and if he gives it no thought longer not to give it practically h s support If I devote myself to other pursuits and contemplations I must first see at least that I do not pursue them sitting upon another man s shoulders I must get off him first that he may pursue his contemplations too See what gross inconsistency is tolerated I h e h rd some of my townsmen say I should like to have them o d me out to help put down an insurrection of the sla e or to march to Mexico —see if I would go and yet these very men have each directly by their allegiance and o ind rectly at least by their money furnished a substitute The sold er is applauded who refuses to serve in

until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy *is* worse than the evil. *It* makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults, and *do* better than it would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ, and excommunicate Copernicus and Luther, and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?

One would think, that a deliberate and practical denial of its authority was the only offense never contemplated by government; else, why has it not assigned its definite, its suitable and proportionate penalty? If a man who has no property refuses but once to earn nine shillings for the State, he is put in prison for a period unlimited by any law that I know, and determined only by the discretion of those who placed him there; but if he should steal ninety times nine shillings from the State, he is soon permitted to go at large again.

If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of government, let it go, let it go: perchance it will wear smooth—certainly the machine will wear out. If the injustice has a spring, or a pulley, or a rope, or a crank, exclusively for itself, then perhaps you may consider whether the remedy will not be worse than the evil; but if it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, I say, break the law. Let your life be a counter friction to stop the machine. What I have to do is to see, at any rate, that I do not lend myself to the wrong which I condemn.

As for adopting the ways which the State has provided for remedying the evil, I know not of such ways. They take too much time, and a man's life will be gone. I have other affairs to attend to. I came into this world, not chiefly to make this a good place to live in, but to live in it, be it good or bad. A man has not everything to do, but something; and because he cannot do *everything*, it is not necessary that he should do *something* wrong. It is not my business to be petitioning the governor or the legislature any more than it is theirs to petition me; and if they should not hear my petition, what should I do then? But in this case the State has provided no way: its very Constitution is the evil. This may seem to be harsh and stubborn and unconciliatory; but it is to treat with the utmost

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kindness and consideration the only spirit that can appreciate or deserve it So is all change for the better like birth and death which convulse the body

I do not hesitate to say that those who call themselves abolitionists should at once effectually withdraw their support, *both in person and property from the government of Massachusetts* and not wait till they constitute a majority of one, before they suffer the right to prevail through them I think that it is enough if they have God on their side without waiting for that other one Moreover any man more right than his neighbors constitutes a majority of one already

I meet this American government or its representative the State government directly and face to face once a year no more in the person of its tax gatherer this is the only mode in which a man situated as I am necessarily meets it and it then says distinctly recognize me and the simplest the most effectual and in the present posture of affairs the indispensable mode of treating with it on this head of expressing your little satisfaction with and love for it is to deny it then.

of slavery upon her sister—though at present she can discover only an act of inhospitality to be the ground of a quarrel with her—the Legislature would not wholly waive the subject the following winter

Under a government which imprisons any unjustly the true place for a just man is also a *prison* The proper place to-day the only place which Massachusetts has provided for her freer and less despondent spirits is in her prisons to be put out and locked out of the State by her own act as they have already put themselves out by their principles It is there that the fugitive slave and the Mexican prisoner on parole and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race should find them on that *separate but more* free and honorable ground, where the State places those who are not *with* her but *against* her—the only house in a *slave-state* in which a free man can abide with honor If any think that their influence would be lost there and their voices no longer afflict the ear of the State that they would not be as an enemy within its walls they do not know by how *much* truth is stronger than error nor how much more eloquently and effectively he can combat injustice who has *experienced* a little in his own person. Cast your whole vote not a strip of paper merely but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority it is not even a minority then but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight. If the alternative is to keep all just men in prison or give up war and slavery the State will not hesitate which to choose If a thousand men were not to pay their tax bills *this year* that would not be a violent and bloody measure as it would be to pay them and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood This is in fact, the definition of a peaceable revolution if any such is possible If the tax-gatherer or any other public officer asks me as one has done "But what shall I do? my answer is If you really wish to *do* any thing resign your office When the subject has refused allegiance and the officer has resigned his office then the *revolution* is accomplished But even suppose blood should flow Is there not a sort of blood shed when the conscience is wounded? Through this wound a man's real manhood and immortality flow out and he bleeds to an everlasting death I see this blood flowing now

I have contemplated the imprisonment of the offender rather than the seizure of his goods—though both will serve the same purpose—because they who assert the purest right and consequently are most dangerous to a corrupt State, com

yourself always tucked up and ready for a start, and not have many affairs A man may grow rich in Turkey even if he will be in all respects a good subject of the Turkish government Confucius said — If a State is governed by the principles of reason poverty and misery are subjects of shame if a State is not governed by the principles of reason riches and honors are the subjects of shame No until I want the protection of Massachusetts to be extended to me in some distant southern port where my liberty is endangered or until I am bent solely on building up an estate at home by peaceful enterprise I can afford to refuse allegiance to Massachusetts and her right to my property and life It costs me less in every sense to incur the penalty of disobedience to the State than it would to obey I should feel as if I were worth less in that case

Some years ago the State met me in behalf of the church and commanded me to pay a certain sum toward the support of a clergyman whose preaching my father attended but never I myself Pay it it said or be locked up in the jail " I declined to pay But unfortunately another man saw fit to pay it. I did not see why the schoolmaster should be taxed to support the priest and not the priest the schoolmaster for I was not the State s schoolteacher but I supported myself by voluntary subscription I did not see why the lyceum should not present its tax bill and have the State to back its demand as well as the church However at the request of the select men I condescended to make some such statement as this in writing — Know all men by these presents that I Henry Thoreau do not wish to be regarded as a member of any incorporated society which I have not joined This I gave to the town-clerk and he has it The State having thus learned that I did not wish to be regarded as a member of that church has never made a like demand on me since though it said that it must adhere to its original presumption that time If I had known how to name them I should then have signed off in detail from all the societies which I never signed on to but I did not know where to find a complete list.

I have paid no poll tax for six years I was put into a jail once on this account for one night and as I stood considering the walls of solid stone two or three feet thick, the door of wood and iron a foot thick and the iron grating which strained the light I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were mere flesh and blood and bones to be locked up I wondered that it should have concluded at length that this was the best use it could

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"Come boys it is time to lock up and so they dispersed and I heard the sound of their steps returning into the hollow apartments My roommate was *introduced* to me by the jailer as a first rate fellow and a clever man When the door was locked he showed me where to hang my hat and how he managed matters there The rooms were whitewashed once a month and this one at least was the whitest most simply furnished and probably the neatest apartment in the town He naturally wanted to know where I came from and what brought me there and when I had told him I asked him in turn how he came there presuming him to be an honest man of course and, as the world goes I believe he was Why" said he "they accuse me of burning a barn but I never did it As near as I could discover he had probably gone to bed in a barn when drunk, and smoked his pipe there and so a barn was burnt He had the reputation of being a clever man had been there some three months waiting for his trial to come on and would have to wait as much longer but he was quite domesticated and contented since *he* got his board for nothing and thought that he was well treated

He occupied one window and I the other and I saw that if one stayed there long his principal business would be to look out *the* window I had soon read all the tracts that were left there and examined where former prisoners had broken out and where a grate had been sawed off and heard the history of the various occupants of that room for I found that even here there was a history and a gossip which never circulated beyond the walls of the jail Probably this is the only house in the town where verses are composed which are afterward printed in circular form but not published I was shown quite a long list of verses which were composed by some young men who had been detected in an attempt to escape who avenged themselves by singing them

I pumped my fellow prisoner as dry as I could for fear I should never see him again but at length he showed me which was my bed and left me to blow out the lamp

It was like travelling into a far country such as I had never expected to behold to lie there for one night It seemed to me that I never had heard the town-clock strike before nor the evening sounds of *the* village for we slept with the windows open which were inside the grating It was to see my native village in the light of the middle ages and our Concord was turned into a Rhine stream and visions of knights and castles passed before me They were the voices of old burghers that

was mended When I was let out the next morning I proceeded to finish my errand and having put on my mended shoe joined a huckleberry party who were impatient to put themselves under my conduct and in half an hour —for the horse was soon tackled —was in the midst of a huckleberry field on one of our highest hills two miles off and then the State was nowhere to be seen

This is the whole history of My Prisons."

I have never declined paying the highway tax because I am as desirous of being a good neighbor as I am of being a bad subject, and as for supporting schools I am doing my part to educate my fellow-countrymen now It is for no particular item in the tax bill that I refuse to pay it I simply wish to refuse allegiance to the State to withdraw and stand aloof from it effectually I do not care to trace the course of my dollar if I could till it buys a man or a musket to shoot one with —the dollar is innocent —but I am concerned to trace the effects of my allegiance In fact I quietly declare war with the State after my fashion though I will still make what use and get what advantage of her I can as is usual in such cases

If others pay the tax which is demanded of me from a sympathy with the State they do but what they have already done in their own case or rather they abet injustice to a greater extent than the State requires If they pay a tax from a mis taken interest in the individual taxed to save his going to jail it is because they have not considered wisely how far they let their private feelings interfere with the public good

This then, is my position at present But one cannot be too much on his guard in such a case lest his action be biased by obstinacy or an undue regard for the opinions of men Let him see that he does only what belongs to himself and to the hour

I think sometimes Why this people mean well they are only ignorant they would do better if they knew how why give your neighbo s th s pain to treat you as they are not inclined to But I think again this is no reason why I should do as they do or permit others to suffer much greater pain of a different kind Again I sometimes say to myself when many millions of men without heat, without ill will without personal feel ng of any kind, demand of you a few shillings only without the poss b l ty such is their constitution of re tracting or altering their present demand and without the possibility on your side of appeal to any other millions why

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world If a man is thought free fancy free imagination free that which *is not* never for a long time appearing *to be* to him unwise rulers or reformers cannot fatally interrupt him

I know that most men think differently from myself but those whose lives are by profession devoted to the study of these or kindred subjects content me as little as any States men and legislators standing so completely within the institu tion never distinctly and nakedly behold it They speak of moving society but have no resting place without it They may be men of a certain experience and discrimination and have no doubt invented ingenious and even useful systems for which we sincerely thank them but all their wit and use fulness lie within certain not very wide limits They are wont to forget that the world is not governed by policy and expe diency Webster never goes behind government, and so cannot speak with authority about it His words are wisdom to those legislators who contemplate no essential reform in the existing government but for thinkers and those who legislate for all time he never once glances at the subject I know of those whose serene and wise speculations on this theme would soon reveal the limits of his mind s range and hospitality Yet com pared with the cheap professions of most reformers and the still cheaper wisdom and eloquence of politicians in general his are almost the only sensible and valuable words and we thank Heaven for him Comparatively he is always strong original and above all practical Still his quality is not wis dom but prudence The lawyer s truth is not truth but con sistency or a consistent expediency Truth is always in har mony with herself and is not concerned chiefly to reveal the justice that may consist with wrong-doing He well deserves to be called as he has been called the Defender of the Con stitution There are really no blows to be given by him but defensive ones He is not a leader but a follower His leaders are the men of 87 I have never made an effort, he says and never propose to make an effort I have never counte nanced an effort and neve mean to countenance an effort to disturb the arrangement as originally made by which the various States came into the Union Still thinking of the sanction wh ch the Constitution gives to slavery he says Be cause it was a part of the original compact—let it stand Notw th tand ng his special acuteness and ability he is unable to take a fact out of its merely political relations and behold it as it l es absolutely to be disposed of by the intellect—what for instance it behoves a man to do here in America

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solute to a limited monarchy from a limited monarchy to a democracy is a progress toward a true respect for the individual Is a democracy such as we know it the last improvement possible in government? Is it not possible to take a step further towards recognizing and organizing the rights of man? There will never be a really free and enlightened State until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power from which all its own power and authority are derived and treats him accordingly I please myself with imagining a State at last which can afford to be just to all men and to treat the individual with respect as a neighbor which even would not think it inconsistent with its own repose if a few were to live aloof from it, not meddling with it nor embraced by it who fulfilled all the duties of neighbors and fellow men A State which bore this kind of fruit and suffered it to drop off as fast as it ripened would prepare the way for a still more perfect and glorious State which also I have imagined but not yet anywhere seen

ter days the spectacle is mightily augmented, as to cost splen dor and variety There is a chief personage— Rex and if I remember rightly neither this king nor any of his great fol lowing of subordinates is known to any outsider All these people are gentlemen of position and consequence and it is a proud thing to belong to the organization so the mystery in which they hide their personality is merely for romance s sake and not on account of the police

Mardi-Gras is of course a relic of the French and Spanish occupation but I judge that the religious feature has been pretty well knocked out of it now Sir Walter has got the advantage of the gentlemen of the cowl and rosary and he will stay His medieval business supplemented by the mon sters and the oddities and the pleasant creatures from fairy land is finer to look at than the poor fantastic inventions and performances of the reveling rabble of the priest s day and serves quite as well perhaps to emphasize the day and ad monish men that the grace line between the worldly season and the holy one is reached

This Mardi-Gras pageant was the exclusive possession of New Orleans until recently But now it has spread to Memphis and St. Louis and Baltimore It has probably reached its limit. It is a thing which could hardly exist in the practical North would certainly last but a very brief time as brief a time as it would last in London For the soul of it is the romantic not the funny and the grotesque Take away the romant c mysteries the kings and knights and big-sounding titles and Mardi Gras would die down there in the South The very feature that keeps it alive in the South—girly girly romance—would kill it in the North or in London *Puck* and *Punch* and the press universal would fall upon it and make merciless fun of it and its first exhibition would also be its last.

Against the crimes of the French Revolution and of Bona parte may b set two compensating benefactions the Revo lution broke the cha ns of the *anc en égime* and of the Church and made a n t o of abject slaves a nation of freemen and Bonaparte n t tuted the setting of merit above birth and also so completely stripped the d vinity from royalty that, whereas crowned b ds n Europe were gods before they are only men since a d an never be gods aga n but only figure-heads and an w r ble for their acts like common clay Such bene factions s th se compensate the temporary harm wh ch Bona

of character can be traced rather more easily to Sir Walter s influence than to that of any other thing or person

One may observe by one or two signs how deeply that influence penetrated and how strongly it holds If one take up a Northern or Southern literary periodical of forty or fifty years ago he will find it filled with wordy windy flowery eloquence romanticism sentimentality—all imitated from Sir Wal er and sufficiently badly done too—innocent traves ties of his style and methods in fact This sort of literature being the fashion in both sections of the country there was opportunity for the fairest competition and as a consequence the South was able to show as many well known literary names proportioned to population as the North could

B t a change has come and there is no opportunity now for a fair competition between North and South For the North has thrown out the old inflated style whereas the Southern writer still clings to it—clings to it and has a restricted market for his wares as a consequence There is as much literary talent in the South *now as ever there was of course but its* work can gain but slight currency under present conditions the authors write for the past not the present they use obso lete forms and a dead language But when a Southerner of genius writes modern English his book goes upon crutches no longer but upon wings and they carry it swiftly all about America and England and through the great English reprint publishing houses of Germany—as witness the experience of Mr Cable and Uncle Remus two of the very few Southern a thors who do not write in the Southern style Instead of three or four widely known literary names the South ought to have a dozen or two—and will have them when Sir Walter s time is out.

A curious exemplification of the power of a single book for good or harm i shown n the effects wrought by *Don Quixote* and those wrought by *I a hoe* The first sw pt the world s admiration for the medie al chivalry silliness out of exist ence and the other r to ed it As far as our South is con cerned the good work done by Cervantes is pretty nearly a dead letter so effectually has Scott s pernicious work under mined it

know personally—is a moody and abstracted middle aged gentleman, who fails to catch your name on introduction and seems the avatar of the commonplace. The witty and ferocious critic whom your fancy had painted as a literary cannibal with a morbid appetite for tender young poets—the writer of those caustic and scholarly reviews which you never neglect to read—destroys the unlife like portrait you had drawn by appearing before you as a personage of slender limb and deprecating glance who stammers and makes a painful spectacle of himself when you ask him his opinion of "The Glees of the Gulches" by Popocatepetl Jones The slender dark haired novelist of your imagination with epigrammatic points to his mustache suddenly takes the shape of a short, smoothly shaven blond man, whose conversation does not sparkle at all and you were on the lookout for the most brilliant of verbal fireworks Perhaps it is a dramatist you have idealized Fresh from witnessing his delightful comedy of manners you meet him face to face only to discover that his own manners are anything but delightful. The play and the playwright are two very distinct entities You grow skeptical touching the truth of Buffon's assertion that the style is the man himself Who that has encountered his favorite author in the flesh has not sometimes been a little if not wholly disappointed?

After all, is it not expecting too much to expect a novelist to talk as cleverly as the clever characters in his novels? Must a dramatist necessarily go about armed to the teeth with crisp dialogue? May not a poet be allowed to lay aside his singing robes and put on a conventional dress suit when he dines out? Why is it not permissible in him to be as prosaic and tiresome as the rest of the company? He usually is

The squirrel would shoot up the tree making only a brown streak from the bottom to the top would seize his nut and rush down again in the most precipitate manner Half way to his den which was not over three rods distant he would rush up the trunk of another tree for a few yards to make an obser vation No danger being near he would dive into his den and reappear again in a twinkling

Returning for another nut he would mount the second tree again for another observation Satisfied that the coast was clear he would spin along the top of the ground to the tree that bore the nuts shoot up it as before seize the fruit and then back again to his retreat

Never did he fail during the half hour or more that I watched him to take an observation on his way both to and from his nest It was snatch and run with him. Something seemed to say to him all the time Look out! look out! "The cat! "The hawk! 'The owl! 'The boy with the gun!

It was a bleak December morning the first fine flakes of a cold driving snowstorm were just beginning to sift down and the squirrel was eager to finish harvesting his nuts in time It was quite touching to see how hurried and anxious and nerv ous he was I felt like going out and lending a hand The nuts were small poor pig nuts and I thought of all the gnawing he would have to do to get at the scanty meat they held My little boy once took pity on a squirrel that lived on the wall near the gate and cracked the nuts for him and put them upon a small board shelf in the tree where he could sit and eat them at his ease

The red squ rrel is not as provident as the chipmunk He lays up stores irregularly by fits and starts he never has enough put up to carry him over the winter hence he is more or less active all the season Long before the December snow the chipmunk has for days been making hourly trips to his den with full pockets of nuts or corn or buckwheat, till his bin holds enough to carry him through to April He need not and I bel eve does not set foot out of doors during the whole win ter But th ed squirrel trusts more to luck.

As alert and watchful as the red squirrel is he is frequently caught by the cat My Nig as black as ebony knows well the taste of h s flesh I have known him to be caught by the black snake and successfully swallowed. The snake no doubt, lay in ambush fo h m

Th f ar this ever present source of danger of the wild creatures, we know little about. Probably the only person in

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The coon is probably the most courageous creature among our familiar wild animals Who ever saw a coon show the white feather? He will face any odds with perfect composure I have seen a coon upon the ground beset by four men and two dogs and never for a moment losing his presence of mind or showing a sign of fear The raccoon is clear grit.

The fox is a very wild and suspicious creature but curiously enough when you suddenly come face to face with him when he is held by a trap or driven by the hound his expression is not that of fear but of shame and guilt He seems to diminish in size and to be overwhelmed with humiliation Does he know himself to be an old thief and is that the reason for his embarrassment? The fox has no enemies but man and when he is fairly outwitted, he looks the shame he evidently feels

In the heart of the rabbit fear constantly abides How her eyes protrude! She can see back and front and on all sides as well as a bird The fox is after her and she has no defense but her speed .unners are after her and she has no defense but her speed She always keeps well to cover The northern hare keeps in the thickest brush If the hare or rabbit crosses a broad open exposure it does so hurriedly like a mouse when it crosses the road. The mouse is in danger of being pounced upon by a hawk and the hare or rabbit by the snowy owl or else the great horned owl

A friend of mine was following one morning a fresh rabbit track through an open field Suddenly the track came to an end as if the creature had taken wings—as it had after an unpleasant fashion There on either side of its last foot im print were several parallel lines in the snow made by the wings of the great owl that had swooped down and carried it off What a l ttle tragedy was seen written there upon the white even surface of the field!

The rabbit has not much wit I once when a boy saw one that had been recently caught, liberated in an open field in the pre en of a dog that was being held a few yards away But th poor thing lo t all presence of mind and was quickly caught by the clumsy dog

A hunt once saw a hare running upon the ice along the shore of one of the Rangely lakes Presently a lynx appeared in hot pur it as soon as the hare found it was being pursued, it beg n to c cle foolish thing This gave the lynx greatly the advantag s it could follow in a much smaller circle Soon the hare was run down and seized.

robin through a zigzag course and not lose a stroke or half a stroke of the wing by reason of any darting to the right or left. The clew is held with fatal precision No matter how quickly nor how often the sparrow or the finch changes its course its enemy changes simultaneously as if every move was known to it from the first.

The same thing may be noticed among the birds in their love chasings the pursuer seems to know perfectly the mind of the pursued This concert of action among birds is very curious When they are on the alert a flock of sparrows or pigeons or cedar birds or snow buntings or blackbirds will all take flight as if there was but one bird instead of a hundred The same impulse seizes every individual bird at the same instant as if they were sprung by electricity

Or when a flock of birds is in flight it is still one body one will it will rise or circle or swoop with a unity that is truly astonishing

A flock of snow buntings will perform their aerial evolutions with a precision that the best trained soldiery cannot equal Have the birds an extra sense which we have not? A brood of young partridges in the woods will start up like an explosion, every brown particle and fragment hurled into the air at the same instant Without word or signal how is it done?

takes to play them May is a scherzo and goes like the wind Yesterday it was just beginning and to-day it is almost done If we could only hold it back! an outdoor friend of mine used to say And I say so too At the most generous calcula tion I cannot have more than a hundred more of such months to hope for and I wish the Master s *baton* would not hurry the *tempo* But who knows? Perhaps th e will be another series of concerts in a better music hall

The world hereabout will never be more beautiful than it was eight or ten days ago with the sugar maples and the Nor way maples in bloom and the tall valley willows in young yellow green leaf And now forsythia is having its turn How thick it is! I should not have believed it half so common Every dooryard is bright with its sunny splendor Sunshine bush " it deserv s to be call d with no thought of disrespect for Mr Forsyth whoever he may have been I look at the show while it lasts In a week or two the bushes will all have gone out of commi sion, so to speak till the year comes round again Shrubs are much in the case of men and women the amount of attention they receive depends mainly on the dress they happen to have on at the moment In my next-door neighbor s yard there is a forsythia bush not exceptionally large or handsome that gives me as much pleasure as one of those wonderful tulip beds of which the Boston city gardeners make so much account Are a million tulips all of one color crowded tightly tog th r and bordered by a row of other tulips all of anothe color really so much more beautiful than a hundred o two of various tints loosely and naturally disposed? I ask the question w thout answering it though I could answer it e sily enough so far as my own taste is concerned

Alr ady the e s much to admire in the wild garden Spice bush blosso ns have come and gone and now the misty shad blow i beg nning to whiten all the hedges and th borders of the wood while sassafr s trees have put forth pretty clusters of y llowish flowers for the few that will com out to see them Sun bright, cold footed cowslips still hold their color along shaded brooks Marsh marigolds some critical people tell u we must call them That is a good name too but the flowers are no more marigolds than cowslips and with or w thout reason (partly it may be because my unregenerat natu e resents the must [illegible] like the w [illegible] was brought up

ance on the last day of April The next morning one had dropped into an ideal summering place a bit of thicket beside a pond and a lively brook—good shelter good bathing and plenty of insects—and from the first moment seemed to have no thought of looking farther I see and hear him every time I pass the spot. The same leafless thicket (but it will be leafy enough by and by) is now inhabited by a catbird I found him on the 6th already much at home feeding singing and mewing Between him and his small high-colored neighbor there is no sign of rivalry or ill feeling but if another catbird or a second warbler should propose settlement in that clump of shrubbery I have no doubt there would be trouble

May-day brought me the yellow throated vireo the parula warbler the white throated sparrow and the least flycatcher the last two pretty late by my reckoning On the 2d came the warbling vireo the veery—a single silent bird the only one I have yet seen—the kingbird the Maryland yellow throat the oven bird and the chestnut sided warbler in addition to the grosbeak before mentioned Then followed a spell of cold unfavorable weather and nothing more was listed until the 6th That day I saw a Nashville warbler—several days tardy—a catbird and a Swainson thrush On May 7 I heard my first prairie warbler and to-day has brought the oriole the wood thrush one silent red-eyed vireo (it is good to know that this voluble preacher *can* be silent) and the redstart It never happened to me before I think to see the Swainson thrush earlier than the wood That I have done so this season is doubtless the result of some accident on one side or the other The Swainson was a little ahead of his regular schedule I feel sure but on the other hand it may almost be taken for granted that a few wood thrushes have been in the neighborhood for several days The probability that any single observer will light upon the very first silent bird of a given species that drops into a township must be slight indeed What we see we tell of but that is only the smallest part of what happens

Some of our winter birds still go about in flocks notably the waxwings the goldfinches and the purple finches Two days ago I noticed a goldfinch that was almost in full nuptial dress as bright as he ever would be I should say but with the black and the yellow still running together a little here and there Purple finches are living high—in two senses—just at present feeding on the pendent flower buds of tall beech trees A bunch of six or eight that I watched the other day

EUGENE FIELD

EUGENE FIELD (1850-1895) was born in St. Louis. His father (a lawyer who was counsel for Dred Scott) and his mother were transplanted Vermonters. His mother died when the boy was six and Eugene, with an older brother, went to live with his mother's cousin in Amherst, Mass. He went to a small private school and then for a year to Williams College. When his father died in 1869 the boy transferred to Knox College, then to the University of Missouri. He did not wait to obtain a degree but at the age of twenty-two—following an unsuccessful attempt at acting—took all that was available of his $8,000 patrimony for a tour of England and southern Europe. On his return in the following year he was married, and the rest of his inheritance was spent on a honeymoon. Field worked for eight years on papers in St. Joseph, St. Louis, Kansas City, and Denver. In 1883 he went to the *Chicago Morning News* (later named the *Record*) and spent the remaining twelve years of his life on its staff. He was among the first of the American newspaper columnists, and his "Sharps and Flats" column brought him national fame. His chief enthusiasms were a love of Horace and book collecting. Both hobbies are reflected in his writing: verses published as *Echoes from the Sabine Farm* (1892) and the delightful essays in *Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac* (1896). He was known chiefly as a story writer, humorist, and poet. His principal works consist of collections of his short stories and half a dozen volumes of verse. *Little Boy Blue* and *Wynken, Blynken, and Nod* remain classics among poems for children. The accompanying selection is taken from *The House: An Episode in the Lives of Reuben Baker, Astronomer, and of His Wife Alice* (1896), a collection on the borderline between fiction and the essay.

Other People's Dogs

WHEN I DISCOVERED one morning that my young sunflowers and my tomato vines had been cut down during the night by some lawless depredator I was mightily incensed. I had not supposed that there was anybody so mean as to commit such a wanton destruction. The value of the property destroyed was not large. I had paid but five cents apiece for the twenty tomato vines, and the young sunflowers were a present from

to attempt to revive it with water which can be used with legal liberality only between the first of November and the first of May

By way of illustrating what a mockery our national Department of Agriculture is I will say that I wrote to Secretary Morton about the cutworms and asked that he suggest an antidote against the same Although five weeks have elapsed since I dispatched that letter I have had no word of any kind from the Department of Agriculture I feel the slight all the more keenly because I am a personal acquaintance of Secretary Morton's having been introduced to and shaken hands with him at the quadrennial convention of the Western Academy of Science at Omaha in 1884 Prompt attention to my letter was due on the score of old friendship The Secretary of Agriculture will recognize his error in offending me if ever he becomes a candidate for the presidency Reuben Baker never forgets an affront

But though my sunflowers and my tomato vines suffered as I have narrated my potatoes were doing finely The potato patch is located in the back yard near the poplar trees it is in the shape of the Big Dipper and I took the precaution to plant the potatoes in the new of the moon The first planting never amounted to anything for the reason that I peeled them and cut out the eyes before putting them in their hills I learned subsequently that this was as fatal a course as it were possible to pursue You must never peel potatoes or cut out their eyes if you want them to grow I do not know why this is so but it is At any rate the second crop I planted was a success Every day I dug down into the hills to see how the potatoes were progressing and I was thus enabled to keep track of the development of the tender fruit

My young friend Budd Taylor provided me with a dozen ears of seed popcorn which I planted in a warm bright spot and which soon bristled up in splendid style I think it likely that but for the birds I should have had a crop of popcorn sufficient to supply the Chicago market for I never before saw anything like that corn for luxuriance and thrift How the birds ever found out about it will doubtless remain a mystery

The birds I refer to proved to be blackbirds although for a time I mistook them for young crows One morning I detected about three dozen of the poaching rogues stalking through the grass in the direction of my cornpatch and almost before I knew it the feathered rascals had played havoc with my promising crop of popcorn. Then I remembered that I

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beautiful) had planted a vast number of nasturtiums and red geraniums and under one of the oak trees had trained numerous graceful dainty vines which as I *recall* are known to horticultural amateurs as cobies

In the twinkling of an eye the Baylor leviathan swept these blossoming innocents out of existence and in other twinklings he wrought desolation among the peonies the pansies and other floral *objects* upon which the women folk had lavished a wealth of patient care A bull in a china shop could hardly create the havoc which the Baylor pup with his one hundred and seventy five pounds of animal spirits wrought in our lawn Next morning the lawn looked as if it had been honored with a nocturnal visitation from Burr Robbins galaxy of domesticated wild beasts.

Curiously enough the Baylors thought it was very funny I don t know why it is but it can t be denied that it is a fact that *those acts which in other people s pups strike us as* strangely improper become *in our* own pups the most natural and most mirth provoking performances in the world I recall the anger with which neighbor Baylor drove neighbor Macleod s mastiff off his porch one evening because *that* mastiff attempted to make his way through the screen door behind which the family *cat* was visible In this instance the Macleod mastiff was simply following the predominating instinct of the canine kind and neighbor Baylor hated the unreasonable beast for it Yet I'll warrant me that while his own lubberly pup was prancing around over our flower beds neighbor Baylor regarded the performance as the most cunning and most charming divertisement in the world

It is much the same way with children If I were put upon oath I should have to admit that the very same antics which I regard as most seemly (not to say fascinating) in my own pretty little darlings I do not approve of at all when I *see* them attempted by the awkward homely children of my neighbors

heartily recommend it to the general public while the additional merit of cheapness endears it to its thrifty upholders. We are all accustomed to talk vaguely about questions of burning interest and the absorbing problems of the day" Some of us even go so far as to have a tolerably clear notion of what these questions and problems are It is but natural then that we should take a lively pleasure not in the topics themselves about which we care very little but in the persuasions and convictions of our neighbors about which we have learned to care a great deal Discussions rage on every side of us and the easy offhand cocksure verdicts which are so frankly confided to the world have become a recognized source of popular education and enlightenment

I have sometimes thought that this feverish exchange of opinions received a fatal impetus from that curious epidemic rife in England a few years ago and known as the Lists of a Hundred Books Never before had such an admirable opportunity been offered to people to put on what are commonly called frills and it must be confessed they made the most of it The Koran the Analects of Confucius Spinoza Herodotus Demosthenes Xenophon Lewis s History of Philosophy the Saga of Burnt Njal Locke s Conduct of the Understanding—such and such only were the works unflinchingly urged upon us by men whom we had considered perhaps as human as ourselves whom we might almost have suspected of solacing their lighter moments with an occasional study of Rider Haggard or Gaboriau If readers could be made by the simple process of deluging the world with good counsel these arbitrary lists would have marked a new intellectual era As it was they merely excited a lively but unfru tful curiosity Living movements Cardinal Newman reminds us do not come of committees I knew indeed one impetuous student who rashly purchased the Grammar of Assent because she saw it in a list but there was a limit even to her ardor for eighteen months afterwards the leaves were still uncut It is a striking proof of Mr Arnold s inspired rationality that while so many of his countrymen were instructing us n this peremptory fashion he alone who might have spoken with authority declined to add his name and list to the rest It was an amusing game he said, but he felt no disposition to play it.

Some variat ons of this once popular pastime have lingered even to our day Lists of the best American authors, lists of

comedy? Was I a pessimist or an optimist and why? What were my favorite flowers and did I cultivate them? What books d d I think young children ought *not* to read? At what age and under what impulses did I consider children first began to swear? What especial and serious studies would I propose for married women What did I consider most neces sary for the all around development of the coming young man? It appeared useless to urge in reply to these questions that I had never been to college never read a line of Greek never been married never taken charge of children and knew noth ing whatever about developing young men I found that my ignorance on all these points was assumed from the beginning but that this fact only made my opinions more interesting and piquant to the people as ignorant as myself Neither did it ever occur to my correspondents that if I had known any thing about Greek comedy or college training I should have endeavored to turn my knowledge into money by writing articles of my own and should never have been so lavish as to give my information away

That these public discussions or symposiums are however an occasional comfort to their participants was proven by the alacrity with which a number of writers came forward some years ago to explain to the world why En lish fiction was not a finer and stronger article Innocent and short sighted readers wedded to the obvious had foolishly supposed that modern novels were rather forlorn because the novelists were not able to write better ones It therefore became the manifest duty of the novelists to notify us clearly that they were able to write very much better ones but that the public would not permit them to do it. Like Dr Holmes they did not venture to be as funny as they could Thoughtful readers of matu e age we were told are perishing for accuracy Th s accuracy they were one and all prepared to furnish without st nt but were proh bited lest the clash of broken commandments should be d spleasing to polite female ears A great deal of angry sentiment was exchanged on this oc casion and a great many original and valuable suggestions were offered by way of rel ef It was an admirable opportunity for any one who had written a story to confide to the world the theory of his art, to make self-congratulatory remarks upon his own standpoint, and to deprecate the stupid pro priety of the public When the echoes of these passionate protestations had died into silence we took comfort in think ing that Hawthorne had not delayed to write The Scarlet

to please say in its columns whether I thought new books or old books better worth the reading It was the kind of question which an ordinary lifetime spent in hard study would barely enable one to answer but I found on examining some back numbers of the journal that it had been answered a great many times already and apparently without the smallest hesitation Correspondents had come forward to overturn our ancient idols with no sense of insecurity or misgiving One breezy reformer from Nebraska sturdily maintained that Mrs Hodgson Burnett wrote much better stories than did Jane Austen while another intrepid person, a Virginian pronounced The Vicar of Wakefield dull and namby pamby declaring that one half the reading world would agree with him if they dared Perhaps they would —who knows?—but it is a privilege of that half of the reading world to be silent on the subject Simple preference is a good and sufficient motive in determining one s choice of books but it does not warrant a reader in conferring his impressions upon the world Even the involuntary humor of such disclosures cannot win them forgiveness for the tendency to permit the individual spirit to run amuck through criticism is resulting in a lower standard of correctness The true value of souls says Mr Pater is in proportion to what they can admire and the popular notion that everything is a matter of opinion, and that one opinion is pretty nearly as good as another is immeasurably hurtful to that higher law by which we seek to rise steadily to an appreciation of whatever is best in the world. Nor can we acquit our modern critics of fostering this self assertive ignorance when they so lightly ignore those indestructible standards by which alone we are able to measure the difference between big and little things It seems a clever and a daring feat to set up models of our own but it is in reality much easier than toiling after the old unapproachable models of our forefathers The originality which dispenses so blithely with the past is powerless to give us a correct estimate of anything that we enjoy in the present.

It is but a short step from the offhand opinions of scientific or literary men to the offhand opinions of the crowd When the novelists had finished telling us in the newspapers and magazines what they thought about one another and especially what they thought about themselves it then became the turn of novel readers to tell us what *they* thought about fiction This sudden invasion of the Vandals left to the novelists but one resource but one undisputed privilege They could permit

EDWARD SANDFORD MARTIN

EDWARD SANDFORD MARTIN (1856-1939) was born at Willow brook, on the shore of Lake Owasco N Y After attending Phillips Ando er Acad my he was graduated in 1877 from Harv rd where he helped found the undergraduate humorous m gazine *Th Lamp on* He rece ved the honorary degree of Master of Arts from Harvard in 1916 a Doctor of Letters degree from the Univers ty of Rochester in 1917 and a Doc tor of Laws degree from Lafayette in 1924 Following his graduation he was for a time in the State Department then briefly on the staff of the *New Yo k Sun* He studied law was admitted to the bar in Rochester and became assistant editor of the *Roch st Un n nd Adv r se* In 1886 he marri d Julia Whitney of Rochester He was one of the founders of the nat onal humorous weekly *L f* became its first ed tor in 1883 and wrote ed torials for it from 1887 to 1933 During twenty years of the same period (1893 1913) he wr te for *Ha p W kly* and for half a dozen years (1929 1935) he cond cted "The Easy Chair depart ment n *H rper's Monthly* H produc d nearly a dozen and a half books among the ea lie t of wh ch were several vol um s of poetry The *Cou tsh p of a Ca ef l Man* (1905) is a gro p of short stories *In a N w C tury* (1908) i a col lection of essay Others of his books deal with national and int rn t on l ffairs It is from h s final volume *What's Ah d d M wh l* (1927) that the follow ng s taken It was first publish d in 1920

Our Convalescent World

THERE is no use in objecting because people don't do what you think they should especially in public concerns The affairs of this world and this life are very incompletely trans acted by people who do as you think they should Most things that happen happen largely as a result of the activities of persons who do what you think they shouldn t or of the failure to function of persons on whom you had built hopes

Take the War! It was pretty much all a consequence of mistakes—the great preliminary mistake well-distributed of starting it von Kluck s mistakes that led up to the battle

and their efforts to supply such hands and plans are amusing when they do not threaten dangerous misdirection and delay

We have had action no end The world has passed the crisis of a terrific sickness and these are days of convalescence but of a convalescence hardly less anxious than the illness it succeeds It is a convalescence full of pains and distempers threatened constantly with relapses needing careful watching and nursing all the time if the patient is to be saved from loss of vital powers and from age long invalidism Certainly in such times people who can sit down and think have need to do it

For there are more world problems nowadays than can be settled even at the polls Indeed the most that will be done at the polls or in conferences or councils will be to record something thought out elsewhere by people sitting apart watching events and taking such council as comes of solitude and meditation We have had a great row and delay and disagreement about the details of a mechanism designed to give a broken world a chance to get well of its fractures and bruises The delay has held back the organization of the remnants left by the War and is generally credited with having done immense harm But after all the delay is only more of the same disease that made the War The War did not cure the disease it ran over into the making of the peace What made the War? Vanity and fear love of riches and love of power What has delayed the peacemakers? The same—vanity and fear love of riches and love of power Those are the things that must be cured if the world is to get well and those are matters that can always be meditated in solitude The cure of them is not political nor economic though politics and economics have their places in it It is spiritual It will come if it comes when the leadership of the world—the controlling leadership —can find the political road humanity should travel and when humanity is ready to travel it.

But it may be debated whether political leadership will ever find that road Humanity may find it by mass instinct The question as to whether leaders lead the herd or the herd crowds them where they ought to go is not altogether easy People of great sobriety and judgment say that no leadership can control the world at this time that the great forces that are working in it will work out whether they are opposed or not breaking bonds and bans their courses shaped by driving instincts behind them.

with confidence for better times and a truer spirit in men It sees a lot of good in the world both spiritual and material it sees knowledge ever increasing and though it recognizes the danger signals and sees how slowly response comes to them and what grave impediments delay it it does not think a world so laboriously improved as this of ours is really going to pot. But even optimism though it has faith in the future hesitates about the present It does not know how far it is to the turn in the road that leads in the direction of harmony and happiness nor how the going will be until we reach it.

its dead body Their temperament is recorded in books of criticism, which are among the best mirrors of the present age

Of course scholars must always study the past for what else is there to study? One cannot study the future But the older pre Darwinian nonspecializing writers were apt to be men of humanistic artistic or religious natures To entertain the reader and to touch his feelings was a part of their province Their works reflect the emotional life that was in the air they breathed Their very vehicles are restful because action as of waves is in them They cradle us in motion and life is motion and the only rest we can know is to be absorbed and soothed by motion The modern sciences, however such as anthropology economics psychology sociology and the schools of writing which they generate do not treat either the past or the present with sympathy They bid the past stand and deliver and bid the public stand and swallow They do not afford that spiritual relief which religion and the fine arts supply and which humanity prizes above all else

Nothing seems to survive the buffets of time except art and religion—in the extreme case Psalms and torsos We worship them the more the less there is left of them The recent critical epoch proves the point Proud has been the scholar who could carry a shard to his den or identify a Ligurian *primitif* through a panel found in Spain He who could clap on the label was crowned In the meantime and while the wine tasters were growing more exquisite in their appreciations the vintages were growing worse If one looks back over the past for a couple of generations one cannot help seeing that there has been a change for the worse in letters and in most of the fine arts Our new poems novels operas and symphonies are not so robust as they were in 1850 nor does the public look forward to them with such piety as our fathers A new poem by Longfellow a work by George Eliot or Victor Hugo—to say nothing of a Brahms symphony—was awaited with reverent expectation as a thing whose incubation was important and whose future was to be perennial To-day there is hardly a pause between the package and the wastepaper basket Haste rules both composition and consumption

I used to believe when speculating on those mysterious conditions that give birth to poetry that the mystery must be ruled by some conjunction of the planets which drives the quills of the poets so fluently and pours out inspiration

clocks of the old handicrafts have ticked? Such a book when seen casually on a friend s table seems to furnish his whole house

In the middle of the nineteenth century certain amateurs became aware of a gradual impoverishment that was creeping over all the handicrafts They sought to remedy this by in tensive cultivation, and to breathe artificial oxygen into the current handwork Yet the older wallpapers remain more interesting calmer better than even those made under the eye of William Morris The truth is that art and letters speak a language that comes from behind the work, not from within it What makes us happy in art and letters is the power in them that has been unconsciously absorbed by the artist, and is unconsciously conveyed to us by his work. For want of a better word I have been using the id-a of leisure to ex press the mystery Leisure is a late and secular word which points toward the gateway of spiritual truth much as the word contemplation tinged as it is with religion, points in the same direction and both of them imply receptivity a reliance on some solution which shall swim into our minds without aid from us a half-cons~iousness that our own facul ties ar- part of the operations of Nature This knack of a loose and dreamy attention seems to be lost to the world for the time being and the loss prevents our seeing life in the enormous perspectives in which it really looms

I suspect that a clue to the trouble is to be found in the phenomenon known to all painters and described by Sir Joshua in his lectures—that the eye loses faculty if rigidly focused

Contract on kills feeling and feeling is a gift that must be spontaneous Emotion is a fluid that connects all the provinces of our being and though we name one of them painting an other poetry another religion they are all interactive and cannot be kept apart by bulkheads or even intelligibly dis-tinguished from one another Do-s not everyone recognize the religious feeling in the *Pickwick Page* ? The quality that has preserved the tragic glory of the *Il ad* is the huge envelop ing piety behind it The ground swell of emotion in the *Iliad* is very different from the human sentiment of Pi-kwick yet the glow in both books comes from the depths of a per vading verence

Our contemporaries are not in sympathy with the gentle ness and largeness of the elder time Their t n ions require

ship through the hordes of modern half savage invaders till everyone was vitalized Shakespeare puts in a phrase the whole spirit of the Renaissance when he says —

> The books the arts the academes
> That show contain and nourish all the world

In nothing did the Cinque Cento show its mental grasp and the bigness of its nature more than in thus seizing upon Greece and Rome as a single influence which was to inspire not only the mind but the character of the moderns Sir Philip Sidney with his enthusiasm with the nobility of his private life and with the dazzling apotheosis that followed an early death did more for the advancement of arts and letters in England than the foundation of half a dozen colleges

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tension their nervousness an edge Our novelists dramatists painters have been hardening their voices and sharpening their pencils They regard nature and human nature with a cold deliberate intellectual eye A jaded palate calls for pickles Ibsen Bernard Shaw Henry James and George Moore—nay the whole band of caterers to what used to be relaxation have become acidulated and bitter prophets of something that is serious and clever The overtones are lost, the technique is tortured The wizards of the day tell us that

his share First one would come out with a scientific definition of it and a general air of mastership Then another would show him up as an impostor and in so doing try and give the impression that he had a rather neat turn for it himself Like all discussions of humor it was strenuous and was accompanied by the sound of h avy blows

Now it is the commonest thing in the world to hear people call the absence of a sense of humor the one fatal defect No matter how owlish a man is he will tell you that. It is a miserable falsehood and it does incalculable harm A life without humor is like a life without legs You are haunted by a sense of incompleteness and you cannot go where your friends go You are also somewhat of a burden. But the only really fatal thing is the shamming of humor when you have it not. There are people whom nature meant to be solemn from their cradle to their grave They are under bonds to remain so In so far as they are true to themselves they are safe company for any one but outside their proper field they are terrible Solemnity is relatively a blessing and the man who was born with it should never be encouraged to wrench himself away

We have praised humor so much that we have started an insincere cult and there are many who think they must glorify it when they hate it from the bottom of their hearts False humor worship is the deadliest of social sins and one of the commonest People without a grain of humor in their composition will eulogize it by the hour Men will confess to treason, murder arson false teeth or a wig. How many of them will own up to a lack of humor? The courage that could draw this confession from a man would atone for everything

No good can come from the mad attempts to define humor but there might be some advantage in determining how people should behave toward it. The first law is that humor is never overtaken when chased It is the one valuable thing which it is worth no man s while to work for If this could only be learned, one of the gloomiest and most nefarious of industries would be banished from the world

So whether it is a man or a woman or a weekly paper or a department of a magazine the best advice in case of a deliberate attempt in this field is to give it up altogether

THE COMING OF FATE

When I seek out the sources of my thoughts I find they had their beginning in fragile Chance were born of little moments that shine for me curiously in the past Slight the impulse that made me take this turning at the crossroads trivial and fortuitous the meeting and light as gossamer the thread that first knit me to my friend These are full of wonder more mysterious are the moments that must have brushed me with their wings and passed me by when Fate beckoned and I did not see it when new Life trembled for a second on the threshold but the word was not spoken the hand was not held out and the Might have been shivered and vanished dim as a dream, into the waste realms of nonexistence.

So I never lose a sense of the whimsical and perilous charm of daily life with its meetings and words and accidents Why today perhaps or next week I may hear a voice and packing up my Gladstone bag follow it to the ends of the world.

THE KALEIDOSCOPE

I find in my mind in its miscellany of ideas and musings a curious collection of little landscapes shining and fading for no reason Sometimes they are views in no way remarkable—the corner of a road a heap of stones an old gate But there are many charming pictures too as I read between my eyes and book the Moon washes the harvest fields with her chill of silver I see autumnal avenues with the leaves falling or swept in heaps and storms blow among my thoughts with the rain beating for ever on the fields Then Winter s upward glare of snow brightens or the pink and delicate green of Spring in the windy sunshine or cornfields and green waters and youths bathing in Summer s golden heat.

And as I walk about, places haunt me a cathedral rises above a dark blue foreign town, the colour of ivory in the sunset light now I find myself in a French garden, full of lilacs and bees and shut in sunshine with the Mediterranean lounging outside its walls now in a little college library with busts and the green reflected light of Oxford lawns —and again I hear the bells, reminding me of the Oxford hours.

CONSOLATION

The other day depressed on the Underground I tried to cheer ... ing over the joys of our human lot. But there

FINLEY PETER DUNNE

FINLEY PETER DUNNE (1867 1936) humorist, satirist, and creator of one of the most famous Irishmen since Saint Pat rick, was Chicago born and reared At the age of seventeen after a public-school education, he worked for sixteen years on half a doze Chicago newspapers. At the turn of the century he moved to New Yo k to edit the *Mor ing Tele g aph* He became the protege of a wealthy New York family who helped him to become part owner of the *American Mag ine* and later ed tor of *Coll er's Weekly* The lavishing, by these patrons, of more than million dollars on Dunne snuffed him out as a writer He retired to Long Island in 1911 Dunne wrote no books but those about the saloon keep ng philosopher Mr Dooley Nine of the ten books were published before h s r tirement. His compositions are all for one instrument but that Harp has m ny stri gs The accom p nying s lection is taken from *M Dooley s Op n ons* (1901)

The City as a Summer Resort

WHERE S DORSEY the plumber these days?" asked Mr Hen nessy

Haven t ye heerd?" said Mr Dooley Dorsey's become a counthry squire He s landed gintry like me folks in th ol dart. He lives out among th bur rds an th bugs in a house that looks like a cuckoo clock. In an hour or two ye'll see him go by to catch the five five He won t catch it because there ain t anny five five Th la ad that makes up th time table found las week that if he didn t get away arlier he cudden t take his girl f'r a buggy ride an he s changed th five five to four forty-eight Dorsey will wait f'r th six siven an he'll find that it don t stop at Paradise Manor where he lives on Satur dahs an Winsdahs except Fridahs in Lent He'll get home at iliven o clock an if his wife s f'rgot to lave the lanthern in th deepo he'll crawl up to th house on his hands an knees I see him las night in at th dhrug sthore buyin ile iv pepper mint f'r his face 'Tis a gran life in th counthry says he 'Far he says fr m th madding crowd says he Ye have no idee he says how goo i it makes a man feel he says, 'to

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that I am says I An I counted as far as I knew an conducted a flock iv sheep in a steeple chase an I d just begun f'r to wondher how th las thing I thought iv came into me head whin a dog started to howl in th yard They was a frind iv this dog in th nex house that answered him an they had a long chat. Some other dogs butted in to be companionnable I heerd Hogan rollin in bed an thin I heerd him goin out to get a dhrink iv wather He thripped over a chair befure he lighted a match to look at th clock It seemed like an hour befure he got back to bed Be this time th dogs was tired an I was thinkin I d take a nap whin a bunch iv crickets undher me windows begun f'r to discoorse I ve heerd iv th crickets on th hearth Hinnissy an I used to think they were all th money but anny time they get on me hearth I buy me a pound iv insect powdher I d rather have a pianola on th hearth anny day an Gawd save me fr m that! An so twas dogs an mosquitos an crickets an mosquitos an a screech owl an mosquitos an a whip poor will an mosquitos an cocks beginnin to crow at two in th mornin an mosquitos so that whin th sun bounced up an punched me in th eye at four I knew what th thruth is that th counthry is th noisiest place in th wurruld Mind ye there s a roar in th city but in th counthry th noises beats on ye er ear like carpet tacks bein dhriven into th dhrum. Between th chirp iv a cricket an th chirp iv th hammer at th mills I'll take th hammer I can go to sleep in a boiler shop but I spint th rest iv that night at Hogan s settin in th bath tub

I saw him in th mornin at breakfast. We had canned peaches an condinsed milk 'Ye have ye er valise says he Aren t ye goin to stay out? 'I am not, says I 'Whin th first rattler goes by ye'll see me on th platform fleein th peace an quite iv th counthry f'r th turmoil an heat I says an food iv a gr reat city I says 'Stay on th farm says I Commune I says 'with nature I says Enjoy I says 'th simple rustic life iv th merry farmer boy that goes whistlin to his wurruk before breakfast, says I But I must go back I says 'to th city I says 'where there is nawthin to eat but what ye want an nawthin to dhrink but what ye can buy I says 'Where th dust is la d be th sprinklin cart, where th ice man comes reg'lar an th roof garden is in bloom an ye re waked not be th sun but be th milkman I says I want to be near a doctor wh n I'm s ck an near eatable food whin I m hungry an where I can put me hand out early in th mornin an hook in a newspaper says I 'Th city says I is th on y summer

CHARLES S BROOKS

CHARLES STEPHEN BROOKS (1878 1934) a Clevelander by birth and residence, followed his graduation from Yale in 1900 by a fifteen year career in business His fealty to a printing concern was increasingly displaced by his devotion to writing His books include publications in diverse genres Among his first titles were four collections of essays *Journeys to Bagdad* (1915) *There's Pippins and Cheese to Come* (1917) *Chimney Pot Papers* (1919) and *Hints to Pilgrims* (1921) These were followed by a novel, *Luca Sarto* and a few little plays for little theaters—*Wappin Wharf* and *A Window at the Inn* He was founder and later president of Cleveland's little theater the Playhouse His final books were a series of leisurely and discursive accounts of his bicycling travels—*Roundabout to Canterbury* (1926) *Roads to the North* (1928) *English Spring* (1932) and *An Italian Winter* (1933) The following selection is taken from *Chimney Pot Papers*

On the Difference Between Wit and Humor

I AM NOT sure that I can draw an exact line between wit and humor Perhaps the distinction is so subtle that only those persons can decide who have long white beards But even an ignorant man, so long as he is clear of Bedlam may have an opinion.

I am quite positive that of the two humor is the more comfortable and more livable quality Humorous persons if their gift is genuine and not a mere shine upon the surface are always agreeable companions and they sit through the evening best. They have pleasant mouths turned up at the corners To these corners the great Master of marionettes has fixed the strings and he holds them in his nimblest fingers to twitch them at the slightest jest. But the mouth of a merely witty man is hard and sour until the moment of its discharge Nor is the flash from a witty man always comforting whereas a humorous man radiates a general pleasure and is like another candle in the room.

I admire wit but I have no real liking for it It has been too often employed against me whereas humor is always an ally It never points an impertinent finger into my defects Humorous persons do not sit like explosives on a fuse They are safe and easy comrades But a wit s tongue is as sharp as a donkey s stick I may gallop the faster for its prodding yet the touch behind is too persuasive for any comfort.

Wit is a lean creature with sharp inquiring nose whereas humor has a kindly eye and comfortable girth Wit if it be necessary uses malice to score a point—like a cat it is quick to jump—but humor keeps the peace in an easy chair Wit has a better voice in a solo but humor comes into the chorus best. Wit is as sharp as a stroke of lightning whereas humor is diffuse like sunlight Wit keeps the season s fashions and is precise in the phrases and judgments of the day but humor is concerned with homely eternal things Wit wears silk but *humor in homespun endures the wind Wit sets a snare where*as humor goes off whistling without a victim in its mind Wit *is sharper company at table but humor serves better in mis*chance and in the rain When it tumbles wit is sour but humor goes uncomplaining without its dinner Humor laughs at another s jest and holds its sides while wit sits wrapped in study for a lively answer But it is a workaday world in which we live where we get mud upon our boots and come weary to the twilight—it is a world that grieves and suffers from many wounds in these years of war and therefore as I think of my acquaintances it is those who are humorous in its best and truest meaning rather than those who are witty who give the more profitable companionship

And then also there is wit that is not wit. As someone has written

> Nor ever noise for wit on me could pass
> When thro the braying I discern d the ass

I sat lately at dinner with a notoriously witty person (a really witty man) whom our hostess had introduced to provide the entertainment I had read many of his reviews of books and plays and while I confess their wit and brilliancy I had thought them to be hard and intellectual and lacking in all that broader base of humor which aims at truth His writing —*catching the bad habit* of the time—is too ready to proclaim a paradox *and to assert* the unusual to throw aside in contempt the valuable haystack in a fine search for a paltry needle

His reviews are seldom right—as most of us see the right—but they sparkle and hold one s interest for their perversity and unexpected turns

In conversation I found him much as I had found him in his writing—although strictly speaking it was not a conversa tion which requires an interchange of word and idea and is turn about A conversation should not be a market where one sells and another buys Rather it should be a bargaining back and forth and each person should be both merchant and buy er My rubber plant for your victrola each offering what h has and seeking his deficiency It was my friend B——— who fairly put the case when he said that he liked so much to talk that he was willing to pay for his audience by listening in his turn

But this was a speech and a lecture He loosed on us from the cold sto ot of his intellect a steady flow of literary allu sion—a practice which he professes to hold in scorn—and wit and epigram He seemed torn from the page of Meredith He talked like ink I had believed before that only people in books could talk as he did, and then only when their author had blotted and scratched their performance for a seventh time before he sent it to the printer To me it was an entirely new experience for my usual acquaintances are good common honest daytime woollen folk and they seldom average better than one bright thing in an evening

At first I feared that there might be a break in his flow of speech which I should be obliged to fill Once when there was a slight paus—a truffle was engaging him—I launched a frail remark but it was swept off at once in th renewed torrent. And seriously it does not seem fair If one speaker insists—to change the figure—on laying all the cobbles of a conversation he should at least allow another to carry the tarpot and fill in the chinks When the evening was over although I recalled two or three clever stories which I shall botch in the telling I came away tired and dissatisfied my tongue dry with disuse

Now I would not seek that kind of man as a companion with whom to be becalmed in a sailboat, and I would not wish to go to the country with him least of all to the North Woods or any place outsid of civilization. I am sure that he would sulk if he were depriv d of an audience He would be crotch ty at breakfast across his bacon Certainly for the woods a hu m o is man is better company for his humor in m schance comforts both him and you A humorous man—and here lies

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nutgalls But is there anything more melancholy than the wit of another generation? In the first place this wit is intertwined with forgotten circumstance It hangs on a fashion—on the style of a coat It arose from a forgotten bit of gossip In the play of words the sources of the pun are lost It is like a local jest in a narrow coterie barren to an outsider Sydney Smith was the most celebrated wit of his day but he is dull reading now Blackwood s at its first issue was a witty daring sheet, but for us the pages are stagnant I suppose that no one now laughs at the witticisms of Thomas Hood Where are the wits of yesteryear? Yet the humor of Falstaff and Lamb and Fielding remains and is a reminder to us that humor to be real, must be founded on humanity and on truth

professional prophets They when confronted with the dawn of a new age insist on addressing to it a comprehensive a universal Whither? They when informed that with the approach of the 1930 s the spiritual climate of the United States entered upon a noticeable change—from negation to affirma tion from disillusion to a renewed faith from the satirical approach to the sympathetic approach from destructive analy sis to constructive synthesis—the professional augurs upon hearing of such things immediately began to ask questions about American Civilization in the 1930 s and American Des tiny in the 1930 s with separate chapters on the Thirties and Religion the Thirties and the Machine the Thirties and Woman the Thirties and children, music art architecture football labor radio aviation armaments the League of Nations in other words the Thirties and Everything

We plain amateurs are content with much less than the cos mic vision For us the advent of a new age means sitting down and looking so to speak, into the wood fire of the imagina tion and wondering what the times will bring not to Civiliza tion or to Humanity but to our own particular little interest, or hobby or foible In the present instance it is Jones What will an age of affirmative sympathetic constructive synthesis do to promote our knowledge and understanding of Jones who is white thirty-eight, married and so forth? After all t is Jones who in the 1930 s will attend or not attend the churches in whose future there is so much interest. He is the man who will live in the architecture of the thirties shout at the football games develop the aviation pay for the music and the radio and be seriously affected by the armaments What will happen to him in the new books of the new decade?

Well to ask the question is to answer it. If the new books reflecting the new thought of the next ten years in America are to be affirmative if they are to be sympathetic if they are to strive for synthesis instead of riot, then it ought to be a pretty good time for Jones The years immediately ahead of us are bound to witness the rediscovery of the ordinary Ameri can man in his normal recognizable aspects—him and his wife and his young and his newspapers and his automobiles and his political parties and opinions and his industries and recreations. People in the new books ahead of us may be expected to resemble one s actual familiar neighbors—the familiar groups the familiar individuals the familiar behavior that so often find themselves submerged.

SIMEON STRUNSKY

SIMEON STRUNSKY (1879 1948) was born in Vitebsk Russia He was brought to America in childhood A New Yorker bred if not born he attended the Horace Mann School, and was graduated from Columbia in 1900 For six years he was a department editor of the *New International Encyclopedia*. He turned to journalism and was for fourteen years an editorial writer on the *New York Evening Post* then becoming an editor for four years From 1924 until his death he was on the editorial staff of *The New York Times* His column, "Topics of the Times" appeared on the editorial page His first book, *The Patient Observer* appeared in 1911 *Post Impressions* (1914) was another collection of miniature essays. New York City is frequently the theme of his writings—from *Belshazzar Court* (1914) devoted to the humors of apartment house life to *No Mean City* (1944) *Professor Latimer's Progress* (1918) and *King Akhnaton* published a decade later are novels—the latter a *roman à clef* built around Woodrow Wilson The accompanying selection is the title essay of his book published in 1931 *The Rediscovery of Jones* which presents a point of view about Americans in sharp contrast to the convictions frequently expressed by the writer of the next essay H L. Mencken

The Rediscovery of Jones

IN THE NEW mood which is reported to have come over the spirit of America toward the end of the 1920 s and in the new books that should reflect this new temper what is likely to happen to Jones? He is the person who figures so prominently in the returns of the United States Census He is in the majority white He is in the majority of native white parentage He is male He is thirty-eight years old He is married He is an advertising solicitor He lives at 1437 West Eleventh Street. In numbers he is together with his wife and children his parents and cousins several scores of millions But in the solid books dealing with the American people and American civilization he was quite generally overlooked in the now elapsed 1920 s Will it be different in the current 1930 s?

To raise the question of Jones on the threshold of a new age is normal procedure for us plain folk We are not like the

the flame of my own temperament It is the only way in which you may start out with Jones who lives at 1437 West Eleventh Street and sells life insurance and end up by penetrating to the real essential naked Jones who lives in a Kafir kraal and worships strange fears and fetishes

The argument is a sound one Any individual Jones in Marietta, Ohio may become in respect to character manners morals, language clothes and dietary habits whatever the genius of his creator is able to make him If you have the necessary ability you may do to Jones of Ohio what Dickens did to Micawber or Mark Twain to Huck Finn You may write a book about a man named Jones who lives in Hartford and whose native language is Turkish he was born in Angora of American missionary parents You may have a man named Jones in S henectady living in an igloo he is the survivor of an Arctic expedition and slightly touched in the head You may have a Jones in Mount Vernon New York who goes about naked he is the leader of a sun cult and does his promenading in the privacy of his own grounds The novelists and poets can do anything they please with Jones

It is quite another matter with the men who write books on economics social science politics democracies schools elections, newspapers movies automobiles factories and families The man who deals with Jones in the mass with Jones of the United States Census cannot invoke the rights of his own vision and his own temperament He is limited in his findings by certain basic data which no amount of creative inspiration can transcend No amount of genius and no intensity of purpose will justify you in saying that the native language of the people of Hartford is Turkish or that the dominant style of domestic architecture in Schenectady is the igloo or that the 8 45 from Mount Vernon is crowded by commuters wearing just nothing The latest finding of the New Physics asserts that truth is only statistical There is no telling beforehand how one electron will behave But one can foretell with certainty how ten bill on electrons will behave With respect to any one atom *you* may be a creative artist. With respect to the community of atoms you must stick to the statistical facts

The heart warms as one peers into the future and sees the serious authors engaged *in sticking* to the facts about Jones the Crowd Man If the subject is Jones and the American press the author will take a *good deal* of pains to ascertain what an American newspaper really contains If the subject

practice among students of American civilization to refer to him as "the Babbitt in his warren

The idea, of course is easily grasped. The Protochukchis dwell in caves dug out of the muddy banks of the Mulliga tawney River two hundred inhabitants to a cave The resultant living conditions sanitary ethical and aesthetic impressed the modern observer as being essentially and lovably human But the average American family four people to the five room apartment suggested to the dispassionate eye of the observer nothing so much as a vermin swarm Indeed that elegant and impressive phrase about the Babbitt and his warren compels the imagination to go further It evokes the Protochukchi mother in her cave as giving birth to her young whereas the American mother apparently added to the population of the United States by littering To such heights of sympathetic identification on the one hand (Protochukchi) and cool de tachment on the other (Syracuse New York) did the study of civilization attain in the United States in the decade after 1920

And what was true of the Protochukchis of Central Pata gonia was also true in this interesting decade of the Hyper cephalonians of New Guinea of the Malosols around North Cape, Siberia, the Microgelasmi of the Atlas Mountains and so forth (all my own discoveries) And on the other hand what was true of Indianapolis and Syracuse was also true of Ogden, Utah, of Montclair New Jersey and so forth The manufacture and ceremonial sanctification of the annual sup-ply of eye salve among the Malosols who are much given to trachoma, assumed a human significance that was utterly lack ing in the problem of adequate hospitalization for the members of the National Education Association of the United States Puberty rights among the Walarumbas of the upper Mackenzie were described with a passion quite absent in our *accounts of* child labor in the mill towns of the lower Connecticut. For it was the glory and charm of these primiti e peoples that they had Folkways and Mores whereas the American people had only customs and manners

Far Away and Long Ago

As between the Protochukchis of Central Patagonia and the inhabitants of South Norwalk Connecticut the very slight attention accorded to the latter was not entirely due to their

about Nova Zembla could not help asking himself why it was necessary to go all the way to Nova Zembla If one wanted a picture of thoroughly instructed and uninhibited child life it might be had so conveniently on Manhattan Island west of Ninth Avenue east of Third Avenue north of Ninety Sixth Street, and south of Wall Street

Babies are all the time being born in two-room flats on Washington Street in the shadow almost of the Stock Ex change Last rites for the dead are continually being p rformed in the kit hen living rooms of the Red Hook section of Brook lyn Small boys go scouting at night through the hallways of the South Bronx and intrude upon intimate woolngs For scores of thousands of families in the New York of 1931 privacy is an unknown thing Concerning the sophisticated and thoroughly enlightened boys and girls who grow up in such an en ironment the welfare workers and the juvenile courts know a great deal As in the case of the Bohunks of the Pennsyl ania coal regions these sophisticated children were a topic of intense popular concern in America before the war

But in the decade of the 1920 s the tenement children of New York, with their rich fund of information about the facts of life were forgotten by the student of Folkways and Mores It was you see merely Growing Up in the United States"

Modes of Speech

As between the members of the Protochukchi Confedera tion and the inhabitants of Spokane Washington it was in evitable that the difference of esteem in which they were held should be reflected in a difference in literary treatment One illustration we have already had in the case of the Protochuk chi festival of capillary evacua ion and the Babbitt in his war ren. With certain exceptions to be noted further on it is easy to grasp the general rule of literary composition in the 1920 s. It prescribed for the primitives a tone of sustained and re spectful gravity and for the Americans a tone vary ng from the acid to the flip

Thus a Malosol medicine man in northern Siberia was in variably described with the deference we may even say with the awe due to an elemental force to an original Datum of Nature But an Episcopal bishop was something that had strayed in from the vaudeville stage However when it was necessary to arraign the Church as an agency of war and

tions symphony orchestras in the Mississippi Valley luncheon clubs Florida vacations marriage life insurance famine relief in China education and the like On these subjects it was the rule that Jones s ideas were a travesty on the human mind and Jones s practices were comic

Quite different was the method prescribed for such subjects as night clubs saxophones the burlesque stage jazz, comic strips prize fights and Coney Island Here were genuine human values with much of th authenticity of the primitive The style took on a corresponding elevation It was *de rigueur* in the 1920 s to speak of middle-class homes as warrens of colleges as Babbitt halls and of bishops as smut hounds But in appraising Mutt and Jeff the writer could not fail to recognize with how sure a touch of genius Bud Fisher has seized upon the dualistic machinery of the Ahriman-Ormuzd motive which derives from the Set-Osiris motive which is only a variant of the Cain and Abel motive For in essence Mutt is always trying to do to little Jeff what Set did to Osiris—namely slay and dismember him.

The United States Constitution as we have seen was a something incurably grotesque But in writing of Buddy Baxter and his Twenty Bouncing Beauties of Broadway Burlesk it was strictly required that one should say "The ecstatic explosion of Bacchic release induced by the projection upon the Puritan inhibited American sensorium of two hundredweight of provocative female flesh."

What Happened to Grandma

Of the decorous writers of this period we have said that they were always dignified on grave subjects as well as on light. Their method of approach may be illustrated by the hypothetical case of Grandmother Jones nee Perkins of the hill country around Ridg field Connecticut.

Let it be remarked, in passing that for the ultra primitive students of civilization Grandmother Jones Perkins had of course ceased to exist. To grasp her utter insignificance it was only necessary to compare her with the typical elderly woman of the Protochukchi culture level Try to visualize this primitive Patagonian dowager going about her daily routine perched naked on a rock in midstream on the lookout for dead fish coming down with the current or steeping manioc roots in water for the family beer or rubb ng the young children of the tribe with lizard oil for eczema or perhaps at her

chian massif Goitre indications are negative Housework in cluding light laundry but excluding table linen and sheets, consumes four and one half hours a day Church including the regular three Sabbatical prayer house exercises and such quasi secular cultus-recreational proliferations as the straw berry festival and the church-organ benefit picnic two hours daily Maintenance of clan and consanguinity bonds —writing to married daughters in California Nova Scotia and Detroit, —one hour weekly The average amount of garden space in cultivation has been estimated at 250 square feet for married women 450 square feet for spinsters and 150 feet for widows but varying considerably with the presence of individual art aptitudes and specialized technological employment—piano water colors putting up fruit for the local market and so forth

The fate of Grandmother Jones Perkins in the years after the war was the fate of the whole Jones family Ignored by the ultra-primitivists and wrapped up beyond recognition by the culture specialists Jones the common man of the United States Census, of Ridgefield Connecticut, and of the New York Subway Jones in his measurable recorded numbers and qualities Jones in his daily observable habits and practices Jones with his newspapers autos schools machines and democracies virtually ceased to exist. In his place flour ished the formulas and the epigrams

Only toward the end of the decade did people begin to sus pect that life in Jones was not quite extinct Beneath the weight of the theories the stencils and the wise-cracks he went on breathing and with the approach of the 1930 s he began to thrust his head up into the li ht The full rediscovery of the American Jones by serious American writers is a prom ise of the years ahead of us It will be a group Jones in har mony with the Census returns and an individual Jones resem bl ng the man next door and across the aisle

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The fate of Grandmother Jones Perkins in the years after th war was the fate of the whole Jones family Ignored by the ultra primitivists and wrapped up beyond recognition by the culture specialists Jones the common man of the United States *Census of Ridgefield* Connecticut, and of the *New York Subway* Jones in his measurable *recorded numbers and qualities* Jones in his daily *observable habits* and practices Jones with his newspapers *autos schools machines*, and *democracies* virtually ceased to exist. *In his place flourished the formulas* and the epigrams

Only toward the end of the decade did people begin to suspect that life in Jones was not quite extinct. Beneath the *weight* of the theories the *stencils* and the wise-cracks he went on breathing and with the approach of the 1930s he began to thrust his head up into the light The full rediscovery of the American Jones by serious American writers is a promise of the years ahead of us It will be a group Jones in harmony with the Census returns and an individual Jones resembling the man next door and across the aisle

room for the British Isles And yet, for all its size and all its wealth and all the "progress it babbles of it is almost as sterile artistically intellectually culturally as the Sahara Desert. There are single acres in Europe that house more first rate men than all the states south of the Potomac there are probably single square miles in America. If the whole of the late Confederacy were to be engulfed by a tidal wave tomorrow the effect upon the civilized minority of men in the world would be but little greater than that of a flood on the Yang tse kiang. It would be impossible in all history to match so complete a drying up of a civilization.

I say a civilization because that is what, in the old days the South had despite the Baptist and Methodist barbarism that reigns down there now More it was a civilization of manifold excellences—perhaps the best that the Western Hemisphere has ever seen—undoubtedly the best that These States have ever seen. Down to the middle of the last century and even beyond, the main hatchery of ideas on this side of the water was across the Potomac bridges The New England shopkeepers and theologians never really developed a civilization all they ever developed was a government. They were at their best, tawdry and tacky fellows oafish in manner and devoid of imagination one searches the books in vain for mention of a salient Yankee gentleman as well look for a Welsh gentleman But in the South there were men of delicate fancy urbane instinct and aristocratic manner—in brief superior men—in brief gentry To politics their chief diversion they brought active and original minds It was there that nearly all the political theories we still cherish and suffer under came to birth It was there that the crude dogmatism of New England was refined and humanized It was there above all that some attention was given to the art of living—that life got beyond and above the state of a mere infliction and became an exhilarating experience A certain noble spaciousness was in the ancient southern scheme of things. The *Ur*-Confederate had leisure He liked to toy with ideas He was hospitable and tolerant. He had the vague thing that we call culture

But consider the condition of his late empire today The picture gives one the creeps It is as if the Civil War stamped out every last bearer of the torch and left only a mob of peasants on the field One thinks of Asia Minor resigned to Armenians Greeks and wild swine of Poland abandoned to the Poles. In all that gargantuan paradise of the fourth rate

H L MENCKEN

HENRY LOUIS MENCKEN Baltimorean born in 1880 of German parentage has published three volumes of reminiscences extending from 1880 to 1936 *Happy Days Newspaper Days* and *Heathen Days* After his graduation from the Baltimore Polytechnic Mencken became successively reporter and editor on local newspapers In New York, associated with George Jean Nathan Mencken edited first the *Smart Set* (1914 1923) and later the newly founded *American Mercury* (1924 1933) He became a stormy petrel of the postwar era —for many he was the vigorous and lusty spokesman of their generation by others he was perched on the eminence of mistrust and cordial dislike indicated in his more than a hundred page compilation of the abuse and insults heaped on him *Menckeniana a Schimpflexikon* (1928) Many of his contributions to magazines were collected in a series of six volumes of *Prejudices* (1919 1927) An enduring contribution of Mencken s to the culture and scholarship of the country has been his publication of *The American Language* First published in 1918 four editions of this book and two *Supplements* have been issued The following essay typical of Mencken s extravagant and goading prose—written some four decades after Mark Twain s similar in theme diatribe *Enchanters and Enchantments*—is taken from the second series of *Prejudices* (1920)

The Sahara of Bozart

> Alas for the South! Her books have grown fewer—
> She never was much given to literature.

IN THE lamented J Gordon Coogler author of these elegiac lines there was the insight of a true poet He was the last bard of Dixie at least in the legitimate line Down there a poet is now almost as rare as an oboe-player a dry point etcher or a metaphysician It is indeed amazing to contemplate so vast a vacuity One thinks of the interstellar spaces of the colossal reaches of the now mythical ether Nearly the whole of Europe could be lost in that stupendous region of fat farms shoddy cities and paralyzed cerebrums one could throw in France Germany and Italy and still have

the device of searching for contraband whisky in women s underwear There remains, at the top a ghost of the old aristocracy a bit wistful and infinitely charming But it has lost all its old leadership to fabulous monsters from the lower depths it is submerged in an industrial plutocracy that is ignorant and ignominious The mind of the state as it is revealed to the nation, is pathetically naive and inconsequential. It no longer reacts with energy and elasticity to great problems. It has fallen to the bombastic trivialities of the camp-meeting and the chautauqua. Its foremost exponent —if so flabby a thing may be said to have an exponent—is a statesman whose name is synonymous with empty words broken pledges and false pretenses One could no more imagine a Lee or a Washington in the Virginia of to-day than one could imagine a Huxley in Nicaragua.

I choose the Old Dominion not because I disdain it but precisely because I esteem it. It is by long odds the most civilized of the southern states now as always It has sent a host of creditable sons northward the stream kept running into our own time. Virginians even the worst of them, show the effects of a great tradition. They hold themselves above other southerners and with sound pretension. If one turns to such a commonwealth as Georgia the picture becomes far darker There the liberated lower orders of whites have borrowed the worst commercial bounderism of the Yankee and super imposed it upon a culture that, at bottom is but little removed from savagery Georgia is at once the home of the cotton-mill sweater and of the most noisy and vapid sort of chamber of commerce of the Methodist parson turned Savonarola and of the lynching bee A self respecting European, going there to live would not only find intellectual stimulation utterly lacking he would actually feel a certain insecurity as if the scene were the Balkans or the China Coast. The Leo Frank affair was no isolated phenomenon It fitted into its frame very snugly It was a natural expression of Georgian notions of truth and justice There is a state with more than half the area of Italy and more population than either Denmark or Norway and yet in thirty years it has not produced a single idea. Once upon a time a Georgian printed a couple of books that attracted notice but immediately it turned out that he was little more than an amanuensis for the local blacks—that his works were really the products not of white Georgia, but of black Georgia. Writing afterward as a white man he swiftly subsided into the fifth rank. And he i not only

progress thereafter But the war not only cost a great many valuable lives it also brought bankruptcy demoralization and despair in its train—and so the majority of the first rate southerners that were left, broken in spirit and unable to live under the new dispensation cleared out. A few went to South America, to Egypt, to the Far East. Most came north. They were fecund their progeny is widely dispersed to the great benefit of the north A southerner of good blood almost always does well in the north. He finds even in the big cities, surroundings fit for a man of condition. His peculiar qualities have a high social value and are esteemed. He is welcomed by the codfish aristocracy as one palpably superior But in the south he throws up his hands It is impossible for him to stoop to the common level He cannot brawl in politics with the grandsons of his grandfather's tenants He is unable to share their fierce jealousy of the emerging black—the cornerstone of all their public thinking He is anaesthetic to their theological and political enthusiasms He finds himself an alien to their feasts of soul. And so he withdraws into his tower and is heard of no more Cabell is almost a perfect example His eyes for years were turned toward the past he became a professor of the grotesque genealogizing that decaying aristocracies affect it was only by a sort of accident that he discovered himself to be an artist. The south is unaware of the fact to this day it regards Woodrow Wilson and Col John Temple Graves as much finer stylists and Frank L. Stanton as an infinitely greater poet. If it has heard which I doubt, that Cabell has been hoofed by the Comstocks it unquestionably views that assault as a deserved rebuke to a fellow who indulges a lewd passion for fancy writing and is a covert enemy to the Only True Christianity

What is needed down there before the vexatious public problems of the region may be intelligently approached is a survey of the population by competent ethnologists and anthropologists The immigrants of the north have been studied at great length and any one who is interested may now apply to the Bureau of Ethnology for elaborate data as to their racial strains their stature and cranial indices their relative capacity for education and the changes that they undergo under American *Kultur* But the older stocks of the south and particularly the emancipated and dominant poor white trash have never been investigated scientifically and most of the current generalizations about them are probably wrong. For example the generalization that they are purely Anglo-

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to the lowest class in their native country" Fanny Kemble Butler writing of the Georgia poor whites of a century later described them as the most degraded race of human beings claiming an Anglo Saxon origin that can be found on the face of the earth—filthy lazy ignorant, brutal proud penniless savages" The Sunday school and the chautauqua of course, h ve appreciably mellowed the descendants of these sav ages and their economic progress and rise to political power have done perhaps even more but the marks of their origin are still unpleasantly plentiful Every now and then they produ e a pol tical leader who puts their secret notions of the true the good and the beautiful into plain words to the amazement and scandal of the rest of the country That amazement is turned into downright incredulity when news comes that his platform has got him high office and that he is trying to execute it

In the great days of the south the line between the gentry and the poor whites was very sharply drawn There was absolutely no intermarriage So far as I know there is not a single instance in history of a southerner of the upper class marrying one of the bondwomen described by Mr Bruce In other societies characterized by class distinctions of that sort it is common for the lower class to be improved by extra legal crosses That is to say the men of the upper class take women of the lower class as mistresses and out of such unions spring the extraordinary plebeians who rise sharply from the com mon level, and so propagate the delusion that all other plebeians would do the same thing if they had the chance—in brief the delusion that class distinctions are merely economic and conventional and not congenital and genuine But in the south the men of the upper classes sought their mistresses among the blacks and after a few generations there was so much white blood in the black women that they were consid erably more attra tive than the unhealthy and bedraggled women of the poor whites This preference cont nued into our own time A southerner of good family once told me in ll seriousness that he had reached his majority before it ever occurred to h m that a white woman might make quite as agreeable a mistress as the octaroons of his jejune fancy If the thing has changed of late it is not the fault of the southern white man but of the southern mulatto women The more s ghtly yellow girls of the region with improving economic opportunities have gained self respect, and so they are no

Saxon in blood This I doubt very seriously The chief strain down there I beli ve is Celtic rather than Saxon particularly in the hill country French blood too shows itself here and there and so does Spanish and so does German The last named entered from the northward by way of the limestone belt just east of the Alleghenies Again it is very likely that in some parts of the south a good many of the plebeian whites have more than a trace of negro blood Interbreeding under concubinage produced some very light half breeds at an early day and no doubt appreciable numbers of them went over into the white race by the simple process of changing their abode Not long ago I read a curious article by an intelligent negro in which he stated that it is easy for a very light negro to pass as white in the south on account of the fact that large numbers of southerners accepted as white have distinctly negroid features Thus it becomes a delicate and dangerous matter for a train conductor or a hotel keeper to challenge a suspect But the Celtic strain is far more obvious than any of these others It not only makes itself visible in physical stigmata—e g leanness and dark coloring—but also in men al traits For example the religious thought of the south is almost precisely identical with the religious thought of Wales There is the same naive belief in an anthropomorphic Creator but little removed in manner and desire from an evangelical bishop there is the same submission to an ignorant and impu dent sacerdotal tyranny and there is the same sharp contrast between doctrinal orthodoxy and private ethics Read Caradoc Evans ironical picture of the Welsh Wesleyans in his preface to My Neighbors and you will be instantly reminded of the Georgia and Carolina Methodists The most booming sort of piety in the south is not incompatible with the theory that lynching is a benign institution Two generations ago it was not incompatible with an ardent belief in slavery

It is highly probable that some of the worst blood of west ern Europe flows in the veins of the southern poor whites now poor no longer The original strains according to every hon est historian were extremely corrupt Philip Alexander Bruce (a Virginian of the old gentry) says in his Industrial His tory of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century that the first native born generation was largely illegitimate One of the most common offenses against morality committed in the lower ranks of life in Virginia during the seventeenth century he says 'was bastardy The mothers of these bastards he continues were chiefly indertured servants and had belonged

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nences in point. Once after I had published an article on some phase of the eternal race question a leading southern newspaper replied by printing a column of denunciation of my father th n dead nearly twenty years—a philippic placard ing him as an ignorant foreigner of dubious origin inhabiting "the Baltimore ghetto and speaking a dialect recalling that of Weber & Fields—two thousand words of incandescent non sense utterly false and beside the point but exactly meeting the latter-day southern notion of effective controversy An other time I published a short discourse on lynching arguing that the sport was popular in the south because the backward culture of the region denied the populace more seemly recre ations Among such recreations I mentioned those afforded by brass bands symphony orchestras boxing matches ama teur athletic contests shoot the chutes roof gardens horse races and so on In reply another great southern journal de nounced me as a man of wineshop temperament, brass jew elry tastes and pornographic predilections In other words, brass bands in the south are classed with brass jewelry and both are snares of the devil! To advocate setting up symphony orchestras is pornography! Alas when the touchy southerner attempts a greater urbanity the result is often even worse Some time ago a colleague of mine printed an article deploring the arrested cultural development of Geor gia In reply he received a number of protests from patriotic Georgians and all of them solemnly listed the glories of the state I indulge in a few specimens

Who has not heard of Asa G Candler whose name is synonymous with Coca-Cola a Georgia product?

The first Sunday school in the world was opened in Sa vannah.

Who does not recall with pleasure the writings of Frank L Stanton Georgia s brilliant poet?

Georgia was the first state to organize a Boys Corn Club in the South—Newton county 1904

The first to suggest a common United Daughters of the Confederacy badge was Mrs Raynes of Georgia

The first to suggest a state historian of the United Daugh ters of the Confederacy was Mrs C Helen Plane (Macon convent on 1896)

The first to suggest putting to music Heber s From Green land s Icy Mounta ns was Mrs F R Goulding of Savannah

And so on and so on These proud boasts came remember not from obscure private persons but from Leading Geor

RANDOLPH BOURNE

RANDOLPH SILLIMAN BOURNE (1886 1918) has had his mis fortunes and h s abilities sympathet cally int mated in a br ef p ssage in *The Happy P of ssion* the autob ography of Ellery Sedgwick eighth ed tor of the *Atlantic Monthly* Randolph Bourne was born in a sardon c hour His body was h deous and mi shapen One felt w thin it all the agues and agonies of Cal ban He was a dwarf in stature without a redeeming feature H s shoulders were twisted and hunched, his face was a mouldy brown, and the skin drawn too tightly over th jaw made his teeth stand out like fangs His mind was a beautiful instrument. Education had taught him to control it by the laws of irony Bourne born in Bloom field N J received his bachelor s degree in 1912 and his master s degree in 1913 from Columbia The Gilder Fellow sh p perm tted him a year of study in London and Paris He became a member of the editorial staff of the *New Re publ* for the four years between its birth and his death. He also became a contr buting editor of the rejuvenated *Dial* and the newly founded *The Sev n Arts* Bourne found time and ene gy in his few years of writing to produce half a dozen books James Oppenheim apostrophized him

"The great hater
Of the dark human deformity
Which is our dying world,
The great lover
Of the spirit of youth
Which is our future s seed

The accompanying sele t on is from the posthumously published (19 0) *History of a Lit rary Rad cal*

This Older Generation

1

I READ WITH ever increasing wonder the guarded defenses and discreet apologies for the older generation which keep filtering through the essays of the *Atlantic* I can even seem to detect a growing decision of *tone* a *definite* assurance of con viction, which seems to imply that a rally has been undertaken

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RANDOLPH SILLIMAN BOURNE (1886-1918) has had his misfortunes and his ab lities sympathetically intimated in a brief passage in *The Happy P ofession* the autobiography of Ellery Sedgwick, eighth ed tor of the *Atlantic Monthly*

Randolph Bourne was born in a sardonic hour His body was hideous and misshapen. One felt within it all the agues and agon es of Caliban He was a dwarf in stature without a redeeming feature His shoulders were twisted and hunched, his face was a mouldy brown and the skin drawn too t ghtly over th jaw made his teeth stand out l'ke fangs. His mind was a beautiful instrument. Education had taught him to control it by the laws of irony Bourne, born in Bloomfield, N J received his bachelor's degree in 1912 and his master s deg ee in 1913 from Columbia The Gilder Fellow sh p permitted him a year of study in London and Paris He became a member of the editorial staff of the *New Re publ* fo the four years between its birth and his death. He also became a contributing editor of the rejuvenated *Dial* and the newly founded *The Seven Art* Bourne found time and ene gy in his few years of writing to produce half a dozen books James Oppenheim apostrophized him

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READ WITH ever increasing wonder the guarded defenses d discreet apologies for the older generation which keep ring through the essays of the *Atlantic* I can even seem to ect a growing decision of tone a definite assurance of contion, which seems to imply that a rally has been undertaken

Through so much of the current writing runs this quiet note of disapprobation These a nostic professors who unsettle the faith of our youth these intellectuals who stick a finger in everybody s pie in the name of social justice" these sensa tion mongers who unveil great masses of political and social corruption these remorseless scientists who would reveal so many of our reticences—why can t they let us alone? Can they not see that God s in his heaven all s right with the world?

II

Now I know this older generation which doth protest so much I ha e lived with it for the last fifteen years ever since I began to wonder whether all was for the best in the best of all possible worlds I was educated by it grew up with it I doubt if any generation ever had a more docile pupil than I What they taught me I find they still believe or at least so many of them as have not gone over to the enemy or been captured by the militant youth of to-day Or as seems rather likely they no longer precisely believe but they want their own arguments to convin e th mselves It is probable that when we really believe a thing with all our hearts we do not attempt to justify it Justification comes only when we are beginning to doubt it

By this older generation I mean, of course the mothers and fathers and uncles and aunts of the youth of both sexes between twenty and thirty who are beginning thei profes sional or business life And I refer of course to the comfort ab e or fairly comfortable American middle class Now this older generation has had a religion a metaphysics an ethics and a political and social philosophy which have reigned practically undisputed until the appearance of the present g neration It has at least never felt called upon to justify it self It has never been directly challenged as it is to-day In order to localize this generation still further we must see it in its typi al setting of the small town or city clustered about the institutions of church and family If we have any socie y whi h can be called American it is this society Its psychol ogy is American psychology its oul is America s soul

This older generation which I have known so well for fif teen years has a re gion wh ch i on the whole as pleasant and easy as could be de ised Though its members are the descendants of the stern and rug ed old Puritans who wres tled with the devil and stripped their world of all that might

itable hand from the ramparts of heaven or offer the kindly patronage to the less fortunate or—most dazzling of all—throw away in a frenzy of abandonment, life and fortune Not to construct a business organization where dishonesty would be meaningless but to be utopianly honest against the business world. In other words the older generation believes in getting all the luxury of the virtue of goodness while con serving all the advantages of being in a vicious society

If there is any one characteristic which distinguishes the older generation it is this belief that social ills may be cured by personal virtue Its highest moral ideals are sacrifice and service But the older generation can never see how intensely selfish these ideals are in the most complete sense of the word selfish What they mean always is I sacrifice myself for you I serve you not, "We cooperate in working ceaselessly toward an ideal where all may be free and none may be served or serve These ideals of sacrifice and service are utterly self ish because they take account only of the satisfaction and moral consolidation of the doer They enhance his moral value but what of the person who is served or sacrificed for? What of th person who is done good to? If the feelings of sacrifice and service were in any sense altruistic the moral enhancement of the receiver would be the object sought But can it not be said that for every individual virtuous merit se cured by an act of sacrifice or service on the part of the doer there is a corresponding depression on the part of the receiver? Do we not universally recognize this by calling a person who is not conscious of this depression a parasite and the per son who is no longer capable of depression, a pauper? It is exactly those free gifts such as schools libraries, and so forth, wh ch are impersonal or social that we can accept gratefully and gladly and it is exactly because the ministrations of a Charity Organization Society are impersonal and businesslike that they can be received willingly and without moral depres sion by the poor

The ideal of duty is equally open to attack The great com plaint of the younger against th older generation has to do with the rigidity of social relationships into which th younger find themselves born The world seems to be full of what may be called canalized emotions One is supposed to love one s aunt or one s grandfather in a certain definite way at the risk of being "unnatural One gets almost a sense of the quantita t ve measurement of emotion Perhaps the greatest tragedy of family life is the useless energy that is expended by ...

ure Christian scheme is a clever but unsuccessful attempt to cure the evils of inequality by transposing the values The slave serves gladly instead of servilely That is he turns his master into a slave That is why good Christian people can never get over the idea that Socialism *means simply* the triumph of one class over another Today the proletarian is down the capitalist up To-morrow the proletarian will be up and the capitalist down To pull down the mighty from their seats and exalt them of low degree is the highest pitch to which Christian ethics ever attained The failure of the older generation to recognize a higher ethic the ethic of democracy is the cause of all the trouble

The notorious Victorian era which in its secret heart this older generation still admires so much accentuated all the latent individualism of Christian ethics and produced a code which, without the rebellion of the younger generation would have spiritually guaranteed forever all moral caste divisions and inequalities of modern society The Protestant Church in which this exaggerated ethic was enshrined is now paying heavily the price of this debauch of ethical power Its rapidly declining numbers show that human nature has an invincible objection to being individually saved The Catholic Church which saves men as members of the Beloved Community and not as individuals flourishes When one is saved by Catholicism one becomes a democrat and not a spiritual snob and aristocrat as one does through Calvinism The older generation can never understand that superb loyalty which is loyalty to a community —a loyalty which paradoxical as it may seem nourishes the true social personality in proportion as the individual sense is lessened The Protestant Church in its tenacious devotion to the personal ideal of a Divine Master—the highest and most popular Christian ideal of to-day—shows how very far it still is away from the ideals and ethics of a social democracy a life lived in the Beloved Community

The sense of self respect is the very keystone of the personality in whose defence all this individualistic philosophy has been carefully built up The Christian virtues date from ages when there was a vastly greater number of morally depressed people than there is now The tenacious survival of these virtues can be due only to the fact that they were valuable to the moral prestige of some class Our older generation with its emphasis on duty sacrifice and service shows us very clearly what those interests were I deliberately accuse the older generation of conserving and greatly strengthening these ideals

ful in keeping these artificial channels open and the correct amount of current running It is exactly this that produces most infallibly the rebellion of the younger generation To hear that one ought to love this or that person or to hear loyalty spoken of as the older generation so often speaks of it as if it consisted in an allegiance to something which one no longer believes in —this is what soonest liberates those forces of madness and revolt which bewilder spiritual teachers and guides It is those dry channels of duty and obligation through which no living waters of emotion flow that it is the ideal of the younger generation to break up They will have no network of emotional canals which are not brimming no duties which are not equally loves

But when they are loves you have duty no longer meaning very much Duty like sacrifice and service always implies a personal relation of individuals You are always doing your duty to somebody or something Always the taint of inequality comes in You are morally superior to the person who has duty done to him *If that duty is not filled with good will and desire it is morally hateful or at very best a necessary evil — one of those compromises with the world which must be made in order to get through it at all But duty without good will is a compromise with our present state of inequality and to raise duty to the level of a virtue is to consecrate that state of inequality forevermore*

III

It is the same thing with service The older generation has attempted an insidious compromise with the new social democracy by combining the words social and service Under cover of the *ideal of service it tries to appropriate to itself the glory of social work and succeeds in almost convincing itself and the world that its Christianity has always held the same ideal* The faithful are urged to extend their activities The assumption is that by doing good to more individuals you are thereby becoming social But to speak of social democracy" which of course means a freely cooperating freely reciprocating society of equals and service together is a contradiction of terms For when you serve people or do good to them you thereby render yourself unequal with them You insult the democratic ideal If the service is compulsory it is menial and you are inferior If voluntary you are superior The difference however is only academic The en

intellectuality as not individual enough Intellectually the older generation seems to lead far too vegetative a life It may be that this life has been lived on the heights that these souls have passed through fires and glories but there is generally too little objective evidence of this subjective fact. If the intuition which accompanies experience has verified all the data regarding God the soul the family and so forth —to quote one of the staunchest defenders of the generation —this verification seems to have been obtained rather that the issues might be promptly disposed of and forgotten. Certainly the older generation is rarely interested in the profounder issues of life It never speaks of death —the suggestion makes it uncomfortable It shies in panic at hints of sex issues It seems resolute to keep life on as objective a plane as possible It is no longer curious about the motives and feelings of people It seems singularly to lack the psychological sense If it gossips it recounts actions effects it rarely seeks to interpret It tends more and more to treat human beings as moving masses of matter ins ead of as personalities filled with potent influence or as absorbin ly interesting social types as I am sure the younger generation does

The older generation seems no longer to generalize although it gives every evidence of having once prodigiously generalized for its world is all hardened and definite There are the good and the criminal and the poor the people who can be called nice and the ordinary people The world is already plotted out. Now I am sure that the generalizations of the truly philosophical mind are very fluid and ephemeral. They are no sooner made than the mind sees their insufficiency and has to break them up A new cutting is made only in turn to be shaken and rearranged This keeps the philosopher thinking all the time and it makes his world a very uncertain place But he at least runs no risk of hardening and he has his eyes open to most experience

I am often impressed with the fact that the older generation has grown weary of thinking It has simply put up the bars in its intellectual shop windows and gone off home to rest. It may well be that this is because it has felt so much sorrow that it does not want to talk about sorrow or so much love that to interpret love tires it or repulsed so many rude blows of destiny that it has no interest in speaking of destiny Its flame may be low for the very reason that it has burned so intensely But how many of the younger generation would eagerly long for such interpretations if the older would only

as a defensive measure Morals are always the product of a situation they reflect a certain organization of human relations which some class or group wishes to preserve A moral code or set of ideals is always the invisible spiritual sign of a visible social grace In an effort to retain the *status quo* of that world of inequalities and conventions in which they most comfortably and prosperously live the older generation has stamped through all its agencies of family church and school upon the younger generation just those seductive ideals which would preserve its position These old virtues upon which however the younger generation is already making guerilla warfare are simply the moral support with which the older generation buttresses its social situation

The natural barriers and prejudices by which our elders are cut off from a freely flowing democracy are thus given a spiritual justification and there is added for our elders the almost sensual luxury of leaping by free grace the barriers and giving themselves away But the price has to be paid Just as profits in the socialist philosophy are taken to be an abstraction from wages through the economic power which one class has over another so the virtues of the older generation may be said to be an abstraction from the virtue of other classes less favorably situated from a moral or personal point of view Their swollen self respect is at the expense of others

How well we know the type of man in the older generation who has been doing good all his life! How his personality has thriven on it! How he has ceaselessly been storing away moral fat in every cranny of his soul! His goodness has been meat to him The need and depression of other people has been all unconsciously to him the air which he has breathed Without their compensating misfortune or sin his goodness would have wilted and died If good people would earnestly set to work to make the world uniformly healthy courageous beautiful and prosperous the field of their vocation would be constantly limited and finally destroyed That they so stoutly resist all philosophies and movements which have these ends primarily in view is convincing evidence of the fierce and jealous egoism which animates their so plausibly altruistic spirit One suspects that the older generation does not want its vocation destroyed It takes an heroic type of goodness to undermine all the foundations on which our virtue rests

If then I object to the ethical philosophy of the older generation on the ground that it is too individualistic and under the pretense of altruism too egoistic I object to its general

HEYWOOD BROUN

HEYWOOD CAMPBELL BROUN (1888 1939) was born in Brooklyn He attended Harvard four years but left without recei ing a degree He became a reporter and later a colum n st in New York, working on various newspapers—the *M g T leg ph* the *Tribune* and the *World* During Wo ld W r I he was sent to France as a correspondent with the A.E.F He married (and divorced sixteen years later) Ruth Hale well known feminist. Broun s journal stic progress was from reporter to sports writer to dramatic crit c to col umnist. In 1928 he became associated with the Scripps Howard newspapers For some years he wrote a column for *The N t n* His books reflect these changes *S e ng Things t N ght* (1921) and *P ece of H t* (1922) include many of his crit cisms of plays *S tting on the Wo ld* (1924) and *It Seems to Me 1925 1935* (1935) are collections of columns of a general ature Broun became increasingly interested in social mal djustments His espousal of the cause of Sacco and Vanzetti led to a break with the *Wo ld* In 1930 he was a Socialist candid te for Congress He was instrumental in founding the American Newspaper Guild, and for the first fou years was its president F ve years before his death he married Connie Madison widow of vaudeville acto Johnny Dooley They soon left New York fo Stamford, Connecticut, where he devoted himself to the waning kind of personal journal sm exemplified in his weekly publ cat on, the *Con necticut Nutm g* later named *B oun Nutmeg* Shortly before his death he was con erted to membership in the Roman Cathol c Church A *Coll t d Ed t on* of his works edited by his son, was published in 1941 The ccompanying essay A Study in Sportsmanship appeared in *Harp r's Magazine* for June 1925

Dying for Dear Old—

A YOUNG MAN is being supported by two comrades as he limps across a field It would not be stretching a point to call him a boy as he is just past nineteen His face is grimed and bloody and one foot drags behind him. He is crying Not because of his injury mind you for this is a deeper hurt. A cause for which he has fought is going down in defeat. After the grave disaster of this afternoon his team has lost

reveal them! And how little plausible is that experience when it is occasionally interpreted! No enthusiasm passion for ideas sensuality religious fervor—all the heated weapons with which the younger generation attacks the world seem only to make the older generation uneasy The spirit in becoming reconciled to life has lost life itself

As I see the older generation going through its daily round of business church and family life I cannot help feeling that its influence is profoundly pernicious It has signally failed to broaden its institutions for the larger horizon of the time The church remains a private club of comfortable middle-class families while outside there grows up without spiritual inspiration a heterogeneous mass of people without ties roots or principles The town changes from a village to an industrial center and church and school go through their time honored and listless motions The world widens society expands formidable crises appear but the older generation does not broaden or if it does the broadening is in no adequate proportion to our needs The older generation still uses the old ideas for the new problem Whatever new wine it finds must be poured into the old bottles

Where are the leaders among the older generation in America who with luminous faith and intelligence are rallying around them the disintegrated numbers of idealistic youth as Bergson and Barres and Jaurés have done in France? A few years ago there seemed to be a promise of a forward movement toward Democracy led by embattled veterans in a war against privilege But how soon the older generation became wearied in the march! What is left now of that shining army and its leader? Must the younger generation eternally wait for the sign?

The answer is of course that it will not wait It must shoulder the gigantic task of putting into practice its ideals and revolutionary points of view as wholeheartedly and successfully as our great grandfathers applied theirs and tightened the philosophy of life which imprisons the older generation The shuddering fear that we in turn may become weary complacent evasive should be the best preventive of that stagnation We shall never have done looking for the miracle that it shall be given us to lighten cheer and purify our younger generation even as our older has depressed and disintegrated us

manently tender And if he succeeds brilliantly he may be no better off The American community is cluttered with ineffective young men who gave their souls to learn drop-kicking and then found that there was no future in it

The football player is not permitted to take any big game casually Emotionalizing his men is accepted by the coach as a necessary part of his functions I was assigned to work on a big halfback a former football star at Harvard told me He was a good defensive player but in the early games he didn t seem to show much fire He was a lonely sort of fellow and it took me some time to find a line to get going on We talked awhile and he told me that he came from Weston Massachusetts I said to him My brother lives in Weston and when you get in that game to-morrow I want you to play so that he and everybody else in Weston will be proud of you You don t want to disgrace my brother in Weston do you?" my football friend continued and the angle I took worked all right In fact it worked a little too well After I d been talking about Weston for quite a time this big halfback began to cry I couldn t get him to stop He was crying the next morning when we got out to the field and the doctor wouldn t let him attend the talk before the game The doctor had to walk him up and down the sidelines to get him quieted down Still he d d go in and play a whale of a game

I ve always wanted to get an exact transcript of the parting words of a head coach to h s men or his subsequent speech between the halves I do know one but it was delivered to the squad of a comparatively small college Just before the North Carolina ele en took the gridiron against Harvard their coach sa d to his players I want you boys to remember that every man on the Harvard team is a Republ can

But in this case oratory fa l d The game was a conventional Republ can landslide More effective was an address del vered to another Southern team which invaded the North On this occa on the coach relinquished his privilege of prov d ng the last words and called an old gentleman into the locker room And the vo ce of the veteran rang out like a trumpet call He spoke of the Civil War and of how the South had held the Yankees back for four years There was a line not to be split by any Yankee pl ncer And the sons of Rebs could do it gain The old man called on the excited youn sters to remember Stonewall Jackson and Robert E Lee They remembered and played gloriously but later there was hard

all claim to the football championship of Cambridge New Haven and Princeton N J

He is young you say and will soon get over the tragedy which has come upon him I am not so sure of that I remember the man who dropped the punt during my Freshman year at Harvard Everybody thought Yale would win easily but the crimson line was holding beyond all expectations The score was 0 to 0 and then this man came into the game The first play to follow was a pun by the Yale fullback This man had the ball squarely in his arms He dropped it Down flashed a Yale end and in six rushes the ball was carried over the line There was no further scoring Yale won

All this happened in November and in June there wandered about the yard an unhappy soul who was known to all his fellows as the man who dropped the punt He was a senior and it may be that graduation brought some release although it must have been hard for him to find a spot in the United States to which the news of his mishap had never carried Fate had been harsh to him but not unscrupulous exactly He did drop the punt The true protagonist of the tragedy was another He might have been spared for at the time his brother dropped the punt this one had not yet matriculated at Harvard That made no difference The tradition endured During his four years of college life he was known universally as the brother of the man who dropped the punt

And in all seriousness I advance the surmise that there are middle aged men in this country who have been a little embittered and shaken for thirty years because of the fact that in some critical football game they acquitted themselves badly The team on which they played was beaten

I don t think this is a fantastic assumption Unless he grows up to be President or defendant in an important murder trial the college football player is likely to receive far more extensive and searching newspaper publicity during his undergraduate days than at any other period of his life He is called upon to face an emotional crisis in his life and to be watched by seventy thousand as he faces it On the following day several million people will read of what he did The quarterback who calls for a plunge through center will be publicly denounced as dull witted if the play is piled up just short of the goal line To stumble in the spotlight never did anybody any good and if the man who fails happens to be nineteen years old he may get an ego bruise which will leave him per

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anything but the signals and to go through with our assignments. They did all the cursing and we won the game

And if all this is well founded why is college football looked upon as the very flower and pattern of the highest sporting ideals in America? I don't know why *I like to watch college* football and I can get emotional about it but when I want moral stimulus and confirmation for my faith in the fundamental romanticism of man I go to see professional baseball There have been scandals in the big leagues and even the most worthy and honest player is paid for his performances on the diamond That doesn't matter The distinction between the amateur and the professional cannot be reduced to a simple formula. In any field of endeavor your true and authentic amateur is a man who plays a game gleefully I have never seen any college player who seemed to get half so much fun out of football as Babe Ruth derives from baseball Ruth is able to contribute this gusto to his game spontaneously Nobody makes him a set speech in the dressing room before he embarks to meet his test. The fans will not spell out N E W Y-O-R K with colored handkerchiefs to inspirit him There will be no songs about hitting the line Indeed Ruth will not even be asked to die for the cause he represents

Instead of running out at top speed Babe Ruth may be observed ambling quite slowly in the general direction of the diamond He approaches a day's work This thing before him is a job and it would not be fitting for him to run But a little later you may chance to see a strange thing happen The professional ball players take up their daily tasks Soon in the cause of duty Ruth is called upon to move from right center all the way to the edge of the foul line And now he is running To the best of my knowledge and belief there is no current gridiron hero who runs with the entire earnestness of Ruth Once I saw him charge full tilt against the wall of the Yankee Stadium It was a low wall and Ruth's big body was so inextricably committed to forward motion that a wall was insufficient to quell the purpose inhering in the moving mass And so his head and shoulders went over the barrier and after a time his feet followed The resulting tumble must have been at least as vicious as any tackle ever visited upon a charging halfback But for Ruth there was no possibility of time out He could not ask so much as the indulgence of a sponge or a paper drinking cup Shaking the disorders out of his spinning head he tumbled himself back over the wall again and threw a runner out at the plate.

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truly summons him is there any necessity of shouting. And so I find the emotion of a big league ball game far more genu ine and deep rooted than at any college football encounter All shade and sensitivity is sacrificed in football by the per nicious practice of regimentation. "A long cheer with three Harvards on the end cries the man in the white sweater through his megaphone It is entirely possible that t the precise moments he calls upon me and my fellows to declare ourselves there is stored up in none of us more than a short cheer It may even be that we have no inclination to cheer at all. Still, the duty is heavy upon us and we must render lip-service

Before the afternoon is done the vilest sort of hypocrisy will be forced upon us When the team in blue comes out upon the gridiron we shall all be called upon to render them a long cheer and to add three Yale s for courtesy This is in violation of the deeper feelings of the human heart We wish no success to Yale At the mass meeting eloquent speakers have *pointed out that it is imperative to the honor of Harvard that* Yale shall be turned back from our gates Already we have sung of our intention to smash bleach and ride them down And here we are called upon to cheer them It is all too distracting Ambi valency is not a condition which one cares to celebrate at the top of his voice

The psychology of baseball is much more simple and more honest. The Washington rooter makes no pretense of wishing the Giants well He pays them the compliment of thorough going opposition In the first game of the last World s Series two home runs were made by New York players It was as if a lace handkerch ef had been tossed into the Grand Canyon This was an aggressive silence A sincere horror and anguish struck forty thousand people into a muteness which fairly throbbed They made no dishonest pretense of polite applause but maintained instead an honorable silence

And yet your baseball player and your baseball fan never take defeat in any such tragic spirit as the football collegian Finality is so long delayed. The game which is lost may be can celled by victory on the succeeding day And all this serves to create in the mind of the impressionable a picture of life more accurate than that which is conveyed by football Defeat is a portion of every man born into the world He must learn to accept it and if he is to amount to much in his community he must get from every check a certain stimulus to appeal from the decis on There is no use crying over spilt milk be

WALTER LIPPMANN

WALTER LIPPMANN was born in New York in 1889. Graduated from Harvard in 1909, he immediately became an assistant to philosopher George Santayana. His first post-academic work was as investigator for Lincoln Steffens on *Everybody's Magazine*. A brief tenure as private secretary to the first Socialist mayor of Schenectady was followed by work on an English translation of Freud. At this time he wrote much of his first book, *A Preface to Politics* (1913). In 1914 he became an associate editor of the *New Republic* for a five-year period (with time out as assistant to Secretary of War Newton D. Baker, working chiefly on peace negotiations). He then moved to the *New York World*, in five years becoming its chief editorial writer, and in another five years its editor. He is now a special writer for the *New York Herald Tribune*, and his frequent columns are syndicated in newspapers throughout the country. He has received honorary degrees in law and in letters from more than a dozen colleges and universities. Foreign honors have included, from France, the Legion of Honor; from Belgium, the Order of Leopold; from Norway, the Order of St. Olaf; and from the Netherlands, the Order of Orange Nassau. For six years he was a member of the Harvard Board of Overseers; for another half-dozen years he was a Senator of Phi Beta Kappa. He is a frequent contributor to magazines, and in thirty years has published more than a score of books. Among them are *Drift and Mastery* (1914), *The Stakes of Diplomacy* (1915), *Public Opinion* (1922), *The Phantom Public* (1925), *Men of Destiny* (1927), *American Inquisitors* (1928), *A Preface to Morals* (1929), *The Good Society* (1937), *U. S. Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic* (1943), a supplementary book, *U. S. War Aims* (1944), and *The Public Philosophy* (1955). The following selection was published in the May 1954 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*.

The Shortage in Education

I

WHAT I AM going to say is the result of a prolonged exposure to the continuing crisis of our western society—to the crisis of the democratic governments and of free institutions during the wars and revolutions of the twentieth century. Now it does

deceiving ourselves seriously We cannot measure the demands upon our people in the second half of the twentieth century—the demands in terms of trained intelligence moral discipline knowledge and not least the wisdom of great affairs—by what was demanded of them at the beginning of the first half of this century The burden of living in America today and of governing America today is very much heavier than it was fifty years ago and the crucial question is whether the increase of our effort in education is keeping up with the increase in the burden.

When we use this standard of comparison we must find I submit, that the increase in our effort to educate ourselves is of a quite different—and of a very much smaller—order of magnitude than is the increase in what is demanded of us in this divided and dangerous world Our educational effort and our educational needs are not now anywhere nearly in balance. The supply is not nearly keeping up with the demand The bur den of the task is very much heavier than is the strength of the effort There is a very serious and dangerous deficit between the output of education and our private and public need to be educated

How can we measure this d screpancy? I am sorry to say that I shall have to use a few figures trusting that none of you will think that when I use them I am implying that all things can be measured in dollars and cents I am using the figures because there s no other way to illustrate concretely the dif ference in the two orders of magnitude—the difference be tween what we do to educate ourselves on the one hand and on the other hand what the kind of world we live in demands of us

What shall we use as a measure of our educational effort? For the purpose of the comparison I think we may take the total expenditure per capita first in 1900 and then about half a century later in 1953 on public and private schools from kindergarten through college

And as a measure of the burden of our task—of the respon sibil ties and of the commitments to which education has now to be addressed—we might take Federal expenditures per cap-ita, first n 1900 and then n our time half a century later

We d ffer among ourselves of ourse as to whether we are spending too much too l ttle or the right amount on defense and on the public services But these d fferences do not seri ously affect the argument For all of us or nearly all of us are agreed on the general size and the scope of the necessary

momentous change in the structure of American society and it has added greatly to the burden upon the schools

The responsibility of the schools for educating the new generation has become very much more comprehensive than it used to be. Ever so much more is now demanded of the schools. For they are expected to perform many of the educational functions which used to be performed by the family the settled community the church the family business the family farm, the family trade

This is a very big subject in itself—much too big for me here—except to mention it as a reminder that the comparison between our real educational effort and our real public need is less favorable than the figures of one to two in 1900 as against one to six today For the school today has a much larger role to play in the whole process of education than it needed to play in the older American society

Can it be denied that the educational effort is inadequate? I think it cannot be denied I do not mean that we are doing a little too little I mean that we are doing much too little We are entering upon an era which will test to the utmost the capacity of our democracy to cope with the gravest problem of modern times and on a scale never yet attempted in all the history of the world We are entering upon this difficult and dangerous period with what I believe we must call a growing deficit in the quantity and the quality of American education.

There is compelling proof that we are operating at an educational deficit It is to be found in many of the controversies within the educational system I am not myself of course a professional educator But I do some reading about education and I have been especially interested in the problem of providing education for the men and women who must perform the highest functions in our society—the elucidation and the articulation of its ideals the advancement of knowledge the making of high policy in the government and the leadership of the people

How are we discussing this problem? Are we as we ought to be doing studying what are the subjects and what are the disciplines which are needed for the education of the gifted children for the leadership of the nation? That is not the main thing we are discussing We are discussing whether we can afford to educate our leaders when we have so far to go before we have done what we should do to provide equal opportunities for all people

tasks of the modern Federal government both in military defense and for civilian purposes Between the highest and the lowest proposals of responsible and informed men I doubt that the difference is as much as 20 per cent. That is not a great enough difference to affect the point I am making That point is that the size of the pub ic expenditure reflects—roughly of course but nevertheless fundamentally—the scale and scope of what we are impelled and compelled to do It registers our judgment on the problems which we must cope with

Now in 1900 the educational effort measured in expenditures per capita was $3 40 The task as measured by Federal expenditure per capita was $6 85 What we must be interested in is I submit the ratio between these two figures We find then that in 1900 the nation put out $1 of educational effort against $2 of public task

How is it now half a century or so later? In 1953 the educational effort was at the rate of about $76 per capita Federal expenditures including defense had risen to $467 per capita The ratio of educational effort to public task which in 1900 was one to two had fallen a half century later to a ratio of one to six

Perhaps I should pause at this point for a parenthesis to say for those who may be thinking how much the value of the dollar has depreciated since 1900 that I am aware of that but for the purposes of this comparison it makes no difference For while the dollar was worth probably three times as much in 1900 as in 1953 we are interested only in the relative effort in 1900 and 1953 The ratio would be the same if we divided the 1953 expenditures by three or if we multiplied the 1900 expenditures by three

You have now heard all the statistics I shall use The two *ratios—the one at the beginning of our rise to the position of the leading great power of the world and the other the ratio a half century later when we carry the enormous burden abroad and at home—these two ratios show that the effort we are now making to educate ourselves has fallen in relation to our needs*

III

I must now remind you that this disparity between the educational effort and the public task is in fact greater than the figures suggest For in this half century there has been a

momentous change in the structure of American society and it has added greatly to the burden upon the schools

The responsibility of the schools for educating the new generation has become very much more comprehensive than it used to be Ever so much more is now demanded of the schools For they are expected to perform many of the educational functions which used to be performed by the family the settled community the church, the family business the family farm the family trade

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There is compelling proof that we are operating at an educational deficit It is to be found in many of the controversies within the educational system I am not myself of course a professional educator But I do some reading about education and I have been especially interested in the problem of providing education for the men and women who must perform the highest functions in our society—the elucidation and the articulation of its ideals the advancement of knowledge the making of high policy in the government and the leadership of the people

How are we discussing this problem? Are we as we ought to be doing studying what are the subjects and what are the disciplines which are needed for the education of the gifted children for the leadership of the nation? That is not the main thing we are discussing We are discussing whether we can afford to educate our leaders when we have so far to go before we have done what we should do to provide equal opportunities for all people

tasks of the modern Federal government both in military defense and for civilian purposes Between the highest and the lowest proposals of responsible and informed men I doubt that the difference is as much as 20 per cent That is not a great enough difference to affect the point I am making That point is that the size of the pub ic expenditure reflects—roughly of course but nevertheless fundamentally—the scale and scope of what we are impelled and compelled to do It registers our judgment on the problems which we must cope with

Now in 1900 the educational effort measured in expenditures per capita was $3 40 The task as measured by Federal expenditure per capita was $6 85 What we must be interested in is I submit the ratio between these two figures We find then that in 1900 the nation put out $1 of educational effort against $2 of public task

How is it now half a century or so later? In 1953 the educational effort was at the rate of about $76 per capita Federal expenditures including defense had risen to $467 per capita The ratio of educational effort to public task which in 1900 was one to two had fallen a half century later to a ratio of one to six

Perhaps I should pause at this point for a parenthesis to say for those who may be thinking how much the value of the dollar has depreciated since 1900 that I am aware of that but for the purposes of this comparison it makes no difference For while the dollar was worth probably three times as much in 1900 as in 1953 we are interested only in the relative effort in 1900 and 1953 The ratio would be the same if we divided the 1953 expenditures by three or if we multiplied the 1900 expenditures by three

You have now heard all the statistics I shall use The two ratios—the one at the beginning of our rise to the position of the leading great power of the world and the other the ratio a half century later when we carry the enormous burden abroad and at home—these two ratios show that the effort we are now making to educate ourselves has fallen in relation to our needs

III

I must now remind you that this disparity between the educational effort and the public task is in fact greater than the figures suggest For in this half century there has been a

learned that we are quite rich enough to defend ourselves whatever the cost We must now learn that we are quite rich enough to educate ourselves as we need to be educated

There is an enormous margin of luxury in this country against which we can draw for our vital needs We take that for granted when we think of the national defense From the tragedies and the bitter experience of being involved in wars for which we were inadequately prepared we have acquired the will to defend ourselves And having done that, having acquired the will we have found the way We know how to find the dollars that are needed to defend ourselves even if we must do without something else that is less vitally important.

In education we have not yet acquired that kind of will But we need to acquire it, and we have no time to lose We must acquire it in this decade For if in the crucial years which are coming our people remain as unprepared as they are for their responsibilities and their mission they may not be equal to the challenge and if they do not succeed they may never have a second chance to try

Most of the argument—indeed the whole issue—of whether to address the effort in education to the average of ability or to the higher capacities derives from the assumption that we have to make that choice But why do we have to choose? Why are we not planning to educate everybody as much as every body can be educated some much more and some less than others?

This alleged choice is forced upon us only because our whole educational effort is too small If we were not operating at a deficit level our working ideal would be the fullest opportunity for all—each child according to its capacity It is the deficit in our educational effort which compels us to deny the chil dren fitted for leadership of the nation the opportunity to become educated for that task

So we have come to the point where we must lift ourselves as promptly as we can to a n w and much higher level of interest of attention of hard work of care of concern of expenditure and of dedication to the education of the Ameri can people

We have to do in the educational system something very like what we have done in the military establishment during the past fifteen years We have to make a breakthrough to a radically higher and broader conception of what is needed and of what can be done Our educational effort today what we think we can afford what we think we can do how we feel entitled to treat our schools and our teach rs—all of that —is still approximately the same position as was the military effort of this country before Pearl Harbor

In 1940 our armed forces were still at a level designed for a policy of isolation in this hemisphere and of neutrality in any war across the two o eans Today the military establish ment has been raised to a different and higher plateau and the effort that goes into it is enormously greater than it was in 1940

Our educational effort on the other hand has not yet been raised to the plateau of the age we live in I am not saying of course that we should spend 40 billions on education be cause we spend that much on defense I am saying that we must make the same order of radical change in our attitude as we have made in our attitude towards defense We must measure our educational effort as we do our military effort That is to say we must measure it not by what it would be easy and convenient to do but by what it is necessary to do in order that the nation may survive and ish We have

never came into contact with him as a man knew him only as a politician and a statesman yet in 1924 Wilson as a politi nan had been dead for years and as for Wilson the statesman he isn t dead yet So what does it signify that they deposited a worn-out body in St Alban s Cathedral in Washington almost exactly twenty years ago?

There is a terrific jest in connection with the career of Wood row Wilson He was repudiated by th American people

For a long time nobody saw anything comic in that and this imperviousness is of course the cream of the jest For fourteen years in fact the American people solemnly accepted it as a fact much to their credit that they had repudiated Woodrow Wilson they so accepted it from 1919 to 1933 But when Hindenburg appointed a certain Adolf Hitler as Chan cellor of the German Rei h the more perceptive Americans began to sense vaguely a discrepancy somewhere and for the next six years th t uneasiness increased But perhaps not until December 7 1941 did the majority of Americans realize that in repudiating Woodrow Wilson they had paralleled the feat of that Mid Western Legislature which in the mid twen ties adopted a r solution to the effect that thereafter in that Sta e *pi* should represent 3 and not 3 1415 plus We repudi ated Woodrow Wilson—say rather that we repudiated Des tiny we repudiated Fact, we repudiated Reality There is the point of the joke

Put it that in 1919 the American people said You must stop it! to Clotho Lachesis and Atropos the three Fates We said it seriously curtly and turned our backs nor did we guess for fourteen years that we had left Clotho Lachesis and Atropos grinning from ear to ear

It is not a fortunate nation that the Weird Sisters hold in derision The jokes that they play are grim jests indeed Wilson knew it In 1924 just before his death he wrote to Philip Kerr The great tr gedy of the last six years is the fa t that American failure to accept world responsibility means that the job will have to be done over again within twenty years ar at ten times the cost He over-estimated the time it was seventeen years later not twenty that the thunderbolt fell, as he had sa d it would But he underestimated the effect it has exacted more than ten times the cost of the war of 1917 18

There is a strange implacability t nging the whole story of Wilson exemplified best, perhaps by the way in which h has come back to life It was none of our *doing* *As a nation*

xfore but not for a long time John C Calhoun and Andrew Jackson both resembled him in body and in temperament but the Calhoun Jackson type had not figured prominently in American politics for many years and in Wilson's time a majority of Americans knew nothing of it

A cursory examination of his origin his early environment and his career is enough to explain why he was bound to confuse and bewilder a great many of his fellow-citizens He was of Scotch Irish ancestry he came from the South he was a stout Presbyterian Each of these *facts* is significant and each helped to puzzle the country each contributed and was bound to contribute to its misconception of the man.

Wood ow Wilson was a Scotch Irishman A hundred years ago the country understood better than it does today what that statement implies for a hundred years ago the country was much more thoroughly British than it is today The Scotch Irishman is something of an enigma even to the unhyphenated *Scot to the Englishman and to the Welshman* but they all understood him better than the rest of the world including the Celtic Irish Jackson and Calhoun puzzled somewhat a country still predominantly British but not as much as Wilson puzzled a country that for a century had been growing more and more non British in blood and in ways of thinking

Wilson was a Calvinist in a country at least twenty five per cent Catholic Lutheran and Jewish and probably forty per cent skeptic The Calvinist too has always been difficult for men of other religions to understand but the proportion of Calvinists in America a century ago was higher than it is now and therefore the popular ability to understand them was greater

Wilson was a Southerner by birth and breeding although he made his career in the North The Southerner certainly from 1865 to 1900 was a man compelled to deal with economic social and political problems of a highly specialized kind His experience d ffered in important respects from that of the citizen of any other region so inevitably his attitudes differed As a result he puzzled other Americans New Englander and Californian may not have understood each other thoroughly in those years but they did not differ from each other on nearly as many points as those on which the Southerner dif fered from them both

The S ot in his nat ve country has never had the reputation of being a soft man physically or morally but the Scotch Irishman is a Scot whose forebears for three hundred years

we were perfectly willing to leave him forever in the realm of gloomy Dis Countless literary undertakers assisted by embalming him in a small library of volumes biographies laudatory and comminatory histories memoirs essays stud ies of all degrees of competence and incompetence philosophical dissertations text books But it is perhaps significant that there is no first rate novel play or poem about Woodrow Wilson When scholars write up a man voluminously he may be pronounced as a rule very thoroughly dead Not science or philosophy but art alone can bring a man of the past back to life Scholars never revive such a man and in the case of Wilson it must be said with all due respect to Mr Ray Stan nard Baker and the rest, that they haven t even made him look natural

The artists however haven t touched him—or certainly not successfully Perhaps this is accident but perhaps it is due to the artists perception whether clear or only half appre hended that there is an artistic imbalance in the story an asymmetry as if a segment were missing Certainly a segment is being added to the story of Woodrow Wilson now for the gaunt old Presbyterian is alive again is dominant again in all men s hearts and minds

It was none of our doing It was the relentless march of events the operation of cold logic of stern reality of pitiless truth that called this gray ghost from the cathedral crypt What he said would happen has happened The thunder of the guns in Poland drowned the scornful laughter with which we received his prophecy and appalled we realized that what we took for stones with which to stone his dream to death were in reality dragon s teeth

And yet no fair minded man looking back upon it now can fail to see that we were in some measure trapped We were—and are—to a greater extent than we like to admit, a soft minded romantic people fed upon fairy stories and this man flung Holy Writ in our faces The New Economic Era two cars in every garage the permanent abolition of poverty—these we could believe coming from a great engineer and a shrewd Vermont Yankee so naturally when a college professor intoned Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap we recognized him as an impractical idealist and if the high gods roared with mirth yet it was a natural assumption For Woodrow Wilson came in strange trappings In body and in mind he was old fashioned In an earlier day we might have placed him more easily for we had seen men of his type

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terian college in the South The experiment was not a success Young Wilson s health suffered under the strain of college w i ain dropped out after a year In the meantime his father had returned to the active ministry taking a church at Wilmington North Carolina.

A year at home restored the young man physically at least far enough to enable him to undertake undergraduate col legiate work again This time he entered his father s *Alma Mater* Princeton where he was graduated with the Class of 1879

He then took a law course at the University of Virginia and entered practice in Atlanta Georgia This experiment too was not a success and from its failure all sorts of psycho-logical deductions have been drawn by men who assume that Woodrow Wilson really wanted to be a lawyer The truth is that at the time and for a good many years afterward for a young college graduate to study law proved only that he did not like either medicine or theology Business was not a career This is hard to understand sixty years later and it was quite impossible to understand in, say New York in 1880 but it is the literal truth In 1880 the South was feeling the first faint *stirrings of the industrialism that was to absorb its energies* and many of its best brains for the next half-century but the movement had not yet gotten really under way Business meant commerce and commerce demanded the mental and tem peramental endowment of the trader While there is nothing intrinsically disreputable about trading as a career it does require talents of a narrowly specialized type The broader ability of the organizer and administrator was not in demand in the business world of the South in 1880 so young men who felt in themselves the capacity for leadership turned to the professions which meant the church medicine and law It was generally recognized that a special aptitude was requisite to success in either divinity or medicine but not in law so a young man at a loss for anything else to do turned that way

The result was that some oddly assorted characters were admitted to the bar in the Southern States Sidney Lanier studied law So did Josephus Daniels So did Thomas Nelson Page The fact that Woodrow Wilson became a lawyer is illum nating as to the narrowness of opportunity in the South at that t me rather than as to the mental traits of the man

In any event h s career at the bar was of the briefest After a year he abandoned it and betook himself to the Johns Hop kins Uni ersity at Baltimore wh ch under the presidency of

its early days might easily have made him so As it was this experience undoubtedly reinforced heavily a trait already present.

A few years teaching at Bryn Mawr and at Wesleyan preceded his appointment to the history faculty of Princeton University in 1890 The brilliance of his record there is attested by the fact that within a dozen years he had risen to the presidency of the university But Princeton was not another Johns Hopkins the basic difference being that it was very old and in the course of many generations had accumulated accretions of sentiment and tradition that had hardened into the consistency of ancient concrete It is obvious as regards many of them that their basis was custom not reason some of them no doubt represented a regrettable slackness in the mental discipline of the institution but it is by no means certain that their removal was as imperatively and urgently necessary as it seemed to Woodrow Wilson. In any event there were those who liked the old ways and they were obstinately defended. In the main Wilson was right and the reforms he effected at Princeton were numerous and salutary but he effected them only at cost of a fight that rent the university so badly as to counteract much of the good he accomplished

By the year 1910 the war had a stalemate Wilson had won a number of battles but his enemies had won on the important point of the location of a new Graduate School and all hands were thoroughly sick of the incessant fighting Then in stepped the Democratic boss of New Jersey Senator James Smith better known to fame as 'Sugar Jim with a singular idea Somehow he acquired the notion that Wilson would make a good organization Governor of New Jersey What possessed Sugar Jim to betray him into such an error no one can say for there was nothing whate er in the man s record to support it. Possibly the boss was convinced by the brilliant but erratic George Harvey editor of *Harpe s Weekly* and ablest of the press representatives of the great financial and industrial interests It was an almost fabulously bad choice on Harvey s part, too but his judgment of men was never conspicuously reliable

Whatever the reason these two Warwicks proceeded to make the fighting president of Princeton the Governor of New Jersey and he promptly became a fighting Governor He proceeded to ram through the Legislature a program of laws curbing the power of the great corporations and acutely distressing the Democratic machine Sugar Jim by the way took

d cided was reasonable and right and from that moment he was completely uncompromising on that point He desired a treaty based on reason and right at the end of the conflict but he was prepared to accept and unhappily did accept a questionable treaty provided he secured the erection of ma chinery by which subsequent international disputes might be settled juridically rather than by violence On this he would not yield either jot or tittle.

So much for Wilson But what sort of country was he leading into this campaign? It was a pretty slack and slip shod country—certainly not a country given to scientific precision in its thinking certainly not a country with much of the s ientist s uncompromising devotion to pursuit of the truth regardless of human emotions and human frailties The coun try was filled with wrath against Germany and it wanted to see Germany whipped That was the sole and simple ba is of its war making The country for the most part had no ob ection to the creation of an improved world ord r if that m ght be accomplished after the defeat of Germany but with the country the creation of the new order was incidental to victory whereas with Wilson victory was incidental to the creation of the new order

What this dichotomy meant in the history of the world we are only now beginning to comprehend A League of Nations ba ked by the full moral military power of the United States Wilson s solution might not have worked We do not know The mere beating of Germany the solution the people pre ferred and imposed did not work That we do know because the fact is written in fire and blood across the map of the world today Perhaps w rejected a solution that would not work, but certainly we accepted one that would not work.

Countless writers in innumerable books have pointed out when and where and how Wilson failed but it is all empty gabble Wilson failed before he started Wilson failed because in the very nature of things he was doomed to failure Many things he might have done differently some no doubt he might have done more wisely but the result would not have been altered He would have failed because no matter how he altered himself he could not alter the country he was leading, and his country was not equal to the burden he imposed upon it. At the same time being the man he was he had to impose that burden Being Wilson he could not do otherwise He was a tragedy in the Grecian style the hopeless contest of a strong man against implacable destiny

it with curious mildness probably he felt he had asked for it, when he made that man Governor and was sportsman enough to accept the consequences of his own mistake But the uproar in New Jersey delighted the country which was disgusted with the reactionary trend of the Taft administration at Washington especially did it delight William Jennings Bryan himself a connoisseur of eloquent polemic in which Wilson was a past master So in 1912 Bryan flung all his great influence to Wilson who was nominated at the Baltimore convention and won an easy victory over an opposition split between Taft and Theodore Roosevelt

There is no doubt whatever that Woodrow Wilson was a great social philosopher There is no doubt that he understood the basic structure of our government its skeletal framework as well as any man of his time and far better than most men in public life Conclusive evidence of this may be found in the program of legislation of the first half of his first administration Formerly and openly he avowed the fact that party leadership is a necessary function of the Presidency—a fact accepted and acted upon by every strong President but openly proclaimed by none before his time Within those first two years he pushed through Congress an amazing number of radical alterations in our political social and economic systems and the proof that they were not mere changes but genuine reforms is the fact that once embodied in the law they have never been removed

In the restricted field of American government, whose structure he thoroughly understood he was superb He accomplished an astonishing amount and speculation cannot fix bounds to what more he might have done had he been permitted to continue his work in that field

But the war that began in 1914 shattered all his plans and compelled him to reconstruct them In the beginning he seems to have shared the delusion common to most Americans that the conflict might be localized and restrained to the continent of Europe Pursuit of this illusion led him repeatedly into blunders that rose up to plague him later but once he realized that the sheer size and weight of the United States must make it a participant in any war of world wide proportions he set himself to the same austere and uncompromising analysis of this problem that he was accustomed to make of any other

He was not long in reaching the conclusion that participation in the war was justifiable only if it led to the creation of safeguards against a repetition of the disaster This he

chance that the machinery might have been used had the League been endowed with the power to move it but the power to operate judicial machinery is only to a small extent police power Mainly it is the moral power possessed by a dis interested judge and the only nation possessed of that power was the United States which rejected the League Naturally from that moment it never had a chance

Not a few of Wilson s supporters clung for years, and some still cling to the dismal theory that the League of Na tions was destroyed out of partisan jealousy and spite Wilson s ill advised appeal for a Democratic Congress in 1918 with the war still raging undoubtedly had done much to strengthen and envenom party spirit which had, indeed never been com pletely damped, even by the exigencies of war and the upsurge of that spirit provoked by the 1918 appeal played its part in 1919 Probably there were those who had nothing else in mind. In view of the subsequent activities that landed him in the penitentiary it is not difficult to believe that such a Repub lican as Albert B Fall may have been animated in the League of Nations fight more by the desire to win office for the Republicans than by anything else However the supposition that the hopes of all mankind were dashed to the ground to the sole end that Harding might be President and Fall Secre tary of the Interior is an irony so terrific that imagination boggles at it. Nor do the facts support it. The remarkable feature of that controversy is not how many small men were moved by partisansh p but how many first rate men rose above it William H Taft and Elihu Root come to mind at once and there were many other Republicans who fought val antly in support of the idea of a Democratic President.

No the League of Nations was rejected not by the Republi can party but by the American peopl and they rejected it because in their judgment the case for it had not been proved The rejection has frequently been described as the revolt of an exhausted people sick of war but the American people were neither exhausted nor really sick of war They had lost 50 000 men killed in battle and another 75 000 dead of d sease or accident—a mere flea bite by comparison with Germany s 1 800 000 dead Russia s 1 700 000 France s 1 400 000 Aus tria s 1 200 000 Great Britain s 900 000 or even Italy s 650 000 But if our losses in blood were small we actually gained in treasure The Bureau of the Census est mates the national wealth of the Un t.d States at 186 billions in 1912 and 320 billions in 1922. Deduct, if you will an increase of 22 billions

After the lapse of more than twenty years it is easy to see the hopelessness of expecting a nation such as the United States of America was in 1919 to comprehend such a concept as that of the League of Nations It was an unbeaten country a happy country an optimistic country and the League of Nations was the fruit of wisdom born of defeat suffering and disillusionment With our customary joyous facility at getting the cart before the horse most of us looked upon the League as impractically idealistic What was wildly impractical of course was the idealistic assumption that in the crowded world of the twentieth century the nations could live happily and safely together without any provision for restraint of one that might go mad The League of Nations was the grimly realistic acceptance of an unpleasant fact but America was too little scarred too little tested too full of ebullient self confidence and adolescent scorn of all others to accept realism or even to recognize it

To this day an astonishing number of Americans are incredulous when they are reminded that the Covenant of the League of Nations as it was originally drawn included machinery for the rectification of any errors that might be discovered in the Treaty of Versailles Under that Covenant, Germany might have attained through processes resembling a suit at law rather than war he correction of whatever impositions she could prove to be plainly unjust

It is possible that Germany never was in the mood to seek rectification of injustice by peaceful means It is possible that the hurt to her pride inflicted by the war of 1914 18 was more painful than the terms of the treaty and a hurt to pride is not easily salved by a law suit It is possible in short that she would have gone to war in any case

But it is equally possible that the Germans are not or were not twenty years ago implacable enemies of the human race but merely a defeated people suffering under a peace treaty that they regarded as unjust and sincerely believing that there was no way of securing justice except by force of arms If it had been known to them that there was a possibility of securing substantial justice through legal process and almost a certainty that an appeal to arms would fail the blandishments of Hitler and his fellow fanatics might have fallen on deaf ears and the tragedy of 1939 might not have occurred

Of course this is not certain but there was a chance that it might have happened The machinery for correcting the mistakes of Versailles was erected in the Covenant there is a

performing prodigies in raising equipping and transporting a gigantic army and that army once assembled on French soil, had swept to swift and easy victory Mentally of course we were aware that we owed the ease of our victory to the fact that the enemy was three fourths beaten before we struck him but emotionally we did not feel this at all. Emotionally all that registered was the fact that America was still the ever victorious and emotion was more powerful than reason

But what irony can surpass the implication that prosperity security and happiness led America to reject the only feasible plan to insure the permanence of her prosperity security and happiness?

For emphasis I repeat that no one knows the plan would have been successful But three things we do know (a) that it was a plan, (b) that it was the only plan presented and (c) that without any plan our prosperity security and happiness were within twenty four years in more deadly peril than they were in 1917 It is hard to imagine any circumstances under which participation in the League of Nations could have brought us to a worse pass than that to which non participation brought us by 1941

Without doubt, it is a cosmic jest, the irony of ironies this spectacle of a great nation regarding itself as too shrewd to deal with any warlock and proving it by striking hands with the Devil himself Afraid of a new order created by Wilson, we intrusted its making to Hitler! It is a great jest and a grisly jest, but it is hardly on Wilson

However it is the spirit of Wilson not Wilson in the frail and errant flesh that Hitler has called from the tomb The twenty-eighth President has suffered in reputation from the injudicious adulation of friends who have thought it treason to admit any fault or flaw in him Wilson was a faulty leader because he was afflicted with the typical ignorance of the scholarly he knew books better than men but that was only a part of it it is probable that he also adopted perhaps subconsciously the heresy that it is virtuous to divorce reason from emotion Certainly many scholars notably scholars of imperial Germany fell into this error as a natural reaction against the extreme romanticism that had well nigh divorced emotion from reason But the German attitude is a heresy because it repudiates the cardinal doctrine of the scientific faith it pretends to serve This cardinal doctrine is that the truth must be accepted no matter how unpleasant the form

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The League of Nations was rejected, not by an exhausted and disillusioned nation but by one intoxicated with success and cherishing the dangerous illusion that its own unaided strength was and would ever remain sufficient for its needs. The enemies of the League who were really effective were not the bitter partisans but the men who honestly believed that the disputed Article X pledging the military strength of the United States to the support of world peace was in fact, a unilateral guarantee Blandly and blindly they assumed that Europe would always need American strength but that th time would never come when America would need European strength A majority of the people shared this belief and clung to it for twenty years clung to it until the very hour when a tremendous combination of tyrannies seemed on the point of wiping out the last strongholds of free government

That is the irony fit to evoke the jeering laughter of the Fates an irony so tremendous that by comparison with it all the other ironies in our national history pale into insignificance If the American people could not believe twenty years ago in the necessity of arranging for the protection of the peace and security of all nations by some form of agreement backed by sufficient force to make it binding why could they not believe? The only possible answer is because their experience had led them to a different conclusion Their experience for more than a hundred years had been that of tranquillity undisturbed by any really serious threat from without The momentary flutter created by Andrew Jackson s thundering denunciation of the French king in 1833 had come to nothing and had been long forgotten the affair of Maximilian in Mexico had been settled satisfactorily without any military exertion Cleveland s sudden assault upon a startled British court in the matter of Venezuela had produced no more than a momentary tension and the brush with Spain in 1898 had resulted not in increased nervousness but in increased confidence The only hostile commander in more than a century that this country had had cause to regard with uneasy respect was Lee the native son and the Confederacy was completely and permanently dead

Even the war with Germany had been more sound and fury than stern fighting It had taught us that we were capable of

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in the national debt in the same period and still we emerge with an increase of 112 billions in the decade that includ d the war

The League of Nations was *rejected*, *not* by an exhausted and disillusioned nation but by one intoxicated with success and cherishing the dangerous illusion that its own unaided strength was and would ever remain sufficient for its needs. The enemies of the League who were really effective were not the bitter partisans but the men who honestly believed that the disputed Article X pledging the military strength of the United States to the support of world peace was in fact, a unilateral guarantee Blandly and blindly they assumed that Europe would always need American strength but that the time would never come when America would need European strength A majority of the people shared this belief and clung to it for twenty years clung to it until the very hour when a tremendous combination of tyrannies seemed on the point of wiping out the last strongholds of free government

That is the irony fit to evoke the jeering laughter of the Fates an irony so tremendous that by comparison with it all the other ironies in our national history pale into insignificance If the American people could not believe twenty years ago in the necessity of arranging for the protection of the peace and security of all nations by some form of agreement backed by sufficient force to make it binding why could they not believe? The only possible answer is because their ex perience had led them to a different conclusion Their experi ence for more than a hundred years had been that of tran *quillity undisturbed by any really serious threat from without.* The momentary flutter created by Andrew Jackson s thunder ing denunciation of the French king in 1833 had come to nothing and had been long forgotten the affair of Maximilian in Mexico had been settled satisfactorily without any military exertion Cleveland s sudden assault upon a startled British court in the matter of Venezuela had produced no more than a momentary tension and the brush with Spain in 1898 had resulted not in increased nervousness but in increased con fidence The only hostile commander in more than a century that this country had had cause to regard with uneasy respect was Lee the native son and the Confederacy was completely and permanently dead

Even the war with Germany had been more sound and fury than stern fighting It had taught us that we were capable of

is indissolubly linked with the safety of all free peoples and that ours cannot be assured without assuring that of others? One greater than Wilson said, long before 1917 none of us liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself It became ever more plain that in the crowded modern world this is as true of nations as it is of individual men

President Roosevelt was criticized for going too far when he said, "Our frontier is on the Rhine but his real error was one of understatement. Our frontier is farther away than the Rhine Our frontier is at the utmost limit of human freedom Wherever a man is enslaved by violence—a yellow Manchu man, a swarthy Spaniard, an ebony Ethiopian as well as a blond Norwegian—our frontier is invaded. It does not follow of course that we should fly to arms to avenge every border incident but we should recognize these incidents for what they are—not the inconsiderable troubles of inferior peoples which we can dismiss with a shrug but denials of the validity of the principle by which we live hence denials of our right to our way of life

Woodrow Wilson knew it and told us the truth but we laughed him to scorn That is why his spirit walks again for in our uneasy minds there is a mocking whisper a taunting suggestion that if we had not laughed we might not have had to march again into the Valley of the Shadow Ironic little devils murmur in our ears that it was a fine thing to save our skins by throwing Europe to the dogs of war in 1919 seeing what it has got us—a shrewd thing to blast the diabolical ambition of Wilson in order to make room for the meek benevolence of Hitler They hail the common sense of hardheaded realistic Americans who flung aside Woodrow so that they might stand face to face with Adolf! An ironic jest indeed—perhaps the greatest since the streets of an ancient city re-echoed the shout, Release unto us Barabbas!

Yet the worst did not befall Perhaps there is some justification for the bland confidence of Americans that their country is the darling of the gods for even when not merely inviting ruin it expends labor and ingenuity to make sure that ruin shall fall upon it that ruin proves incomplete For twenty years we had been asking for war and at last we got it. Yet when it came inexplicably and contrary to all logic and reason Britain stood up for a year unaided and alone Contrary to all expectation and all expert opinion the Russian army's quality proved to be commensurate with its size Con

in which it appears The truth is that men while they may sometimes be reasoning beings are always emotional beings

This truth is not relevant to all sciences It has no bearing on an investigation of the theory of wave mechanics for example, or an inquiry into the chemical composition of hormones But it is the very essence of the science of government Woodrow Wilson rarely made any concessions to the emotional nature of his fellows he frequently infuriated them when he might have placated them without sacrificing anything of value and even more frequently he bewildered them when he might have explained with only trifling expenditure of time and effort Moreover there is plenty of reason to suspect that he accounted it unto himself for righteousness that he appealed always to reason and conscience ruthlessly ignoring passion and prejudice But in a ruler that is not righteousness That jeopardizes the promotion of the general welfare which is the supreme duty of a ruler in a democratic state and whatever *jeopardizes the discharge of a man s duty is a flaw in* his conduct

It is probable that if Wilson had been as clever a psychologist as both Roosevelts put together still he would have been doomed to defeat Inability to comprehend the necessity of the League was inherent in the country and could not have been removed by the most skillful appeal Nevertheless if Wilson s rectitude had been somewhat less austere his moral stature would have been not less but greater

All that though is *of the past Wilson s personal* faults are buried with him and even the shattering blast of Hitler s bugle-horn cannot release them from the tomb What haunts our minds today is not the sometimes irritating personality but the statesman who declared I am seeking only to face realities and to face them without soft concealments *Did* he speak the truth? It seems ever more likely as the harshest sort of realities are thrust every day before our wavering eyes

We failed to understand when he said The day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured Most of us then favored spending our blood and our might only to assure our own safety have we progressed beyond that point in twenty four years?

The question is an embarrassing one but it is of far greater consequence to the republic than any terms of war or any terms of peace Have we realized yet that our own safety

realization of the fact that of po itical principles too it may be said that time and chance happeneth to them all There is a strange delusion in this country that the weakness of France was the stren th of her scoundrels the truth is it was rather the strength of the conviction of her honest men. Consider how hard it was even after the fearful lesson of national disaster for Americans to bring Giraud and De Gaulle together Yet they were both patriots

Without doubt, the Third Republic had its scoundrels but the deadlock that opened the way for the scoundrels was caused by its men of principles who were intransigent A principle said the acid Professor Cornford is a rule of inaction which states a valid general reason for not doing in any particular case what, to unprincipled instinct would appear to be right At least it was so in France Honest men would not perhaps could not certainly did not yield their principles far enough to set up an effective although im perfect, government The ironies of French history are mul titudinous but Frenchmen apparently have never drawn from them the obvious inference that no man should have so much confidence in the rightness of his own cause that he will check and hinder the operations of the government sooner than admit that there may be a modicum of right on his opponent s side

Everywhere it is when honest men are hopelessly divided that thieves fill all the offices in America honest men have always been divided but never hopelessly so except in 1860 and the result then was the most fearful convulsion that our country has ever experienced At all other times honest men while not convinced by a beating at the polls have retained enough doubt of their own omniscience to awa t the outcome peacefully and the experience of a hundred and sixty seven years has just fied them

Justified they are too by the ironical stories with which the history of their nation is studded for the last has been first, and the first last so often that only a fool will say of any man or event in public li.e I know beyond per adventure what must be the outcome of this It is something worth keep ing in mind these days when the country approaches some of the most difficult and perplexing decisions it has ever been called upon to make Some of us are bound to be disappointed but to despair would be to reject the lessons of our own history What may seem to be a triumph at the time may lead us to woe immeasurable but, on the other hand although

trary to all oriental calculation the paralyzing blow at Pearl Harbor did not paralyze but only enraged Fate relented and gave us time

So almost miraculously we have another chance We have also that perambulating conscience of America Woodrow Wilson come alive again and speaking in every man s ear telling us no fairy tales but stern old truths reminding us that greed is suicidal that suspicion of all the world is silly that self righteousness leads straight to humiliation That old man is still as he always was bitter but tonic Possibly we shall hear him even when the troubadours come around again, some other great engineer some other shrewd Yankee sing ing mellifluously of a chicken in every pot and two cars in every garage dulcetly inviting us to turn from the bleak Presbyterian prophet and put our trust in none of the ancient creeds that stem from Judea nor in their exponents whether priest or presbyter or rabbi but solely and completely in the Church of the Holy Dividends which is the religion of practical men

Perhaps—yet no man can say more than that we have the chance Probably no man can say with assurance what we have done after we have acted nor even for twenty years thereafter for if there is any conclusion to which examination of the ironies of American history leads it is that contemporary estimates are likely to be inaccurate in the extreme

But is this necessarily a depressing conclusion? It seems to me that it need be so only to a man much more convinced of the rightness of his own views than any man should be or that any man who has studied American history attentively can be

Indeed distrust expressed or implied of the eternal verity of one s own views is the secret of the survival of this republic It may astonish Europeans to hear it proclaimed that a real and deep rooted modesty is of the very essence of American ism but it is so and a little reflection will establish it The republic has survived because the defeated party has always acquiesced in the decision at the polls the sole exception hav ing occurred after the election of 1860 But this could not possibly have been repeated year after year had the defeated candidate and his friends been convinced to the bottom of their souls that they alone possessed the truth that is essential to salvation

We have had in the case of France an appalling demonstra tion of what happens to a democracy in which there is no

CHRISTOPHER DARLINGTON MORLEY was born in Haverford Pa in 1890 Twenty years later he was graduated from Haverford College where for a dozen years his father had been a professor of mathematics. He is one of three brothers who all became Rhodes scholars After three years at New College Oxford, Morley returned to America and joined the editorial staff of Doubleday Page He maintained this connection four years before going into newspaper work He has written a column for various newspapers—the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* the *New York Evening Post* the *Saturday Review of Literature* He has been a versatile and prolific writer having produced some fifty books His newspaper columns and other writings have been gathered into several collections of essays—*Pipefuls Mince Pie Shandygaff Plum Pudding* Among his widely read novels have been *Parnassus on Wheels The Haunted Book Shop Thunder on the Left* and *Kitty Foyle* Delightful verse—*Songs for a Little House*—and a play or two—*Th e a C wd*—are among his varied output. In 1930 the famous rare-book dealer Dr A S W Rosenbach, founded a Fellowship in Bibliography at the University of Pennsylvania This fellowship produces an annual series of lectures by distinguished authorities on some aspect of writing publishing or book collecting Morley was invited to give the first series of these public lectures in 1931 His talks were published under the title *Ex Libris Carissimis* In a felicitous and modest preface the author reminds the reader "These were not lectures but conversations taken down with drastic fidelity by a disconcertingly accurate stenographer Their colloquial character is obvious and it requires courage to print them in this form If apology is needed it is supplied in the second paragraph of the following essay which is the second in the group of five talks

Three kinds of Collectors

IN THE Anglican Prayer book there is a magnificent passage which by just transposing the accent leaps to the eye of the booklover You find it written there that 'The first collect for the day the second collect *for* peace the third collect for grace to live well' Of that triple division of collectors I hope the third may be our classification. Those who collect

telephone booth now dismantled out at Haverford College a telephone booth which during many undergraduate generations served as the only outlet of romance for a dormitory of young men For many years the inhabitants of that dormitory did all their telephoning to Bryn Mawr over that one piece of copper wire a portion of which I rescued when the booth was torn down last year And as you may imagine that copper wire now somewhat tarnished seems to show in its faded color signs of atomic fatigue When I think what naive and youthful electricities must have traversed that shining thread I am moved with a sentimental recollection and I say to myself that that wire can charmingly symbolize the function of literature as communication.

The second item that I choose from this motley little collection is the silver mounted cork from a set of glass phials That little series of test tubes was given to me years ago by a book collector for purposes that I will not insist upon but at any rate I say to myself that that little cork can represent in literature or in art the great function of intoxication or ecstasy Similarly it might represent the narcotic or sedative functions of literature which are also important

The third remainder in this cardboard box is a quartz Indian arrowhead which I picked up on the front lawn of a Long Island home during a spell of exceptionally hot weather a few years ago when on account of the drought the roots of the grass lay bare and the suburban gardener tended his turf more carefully than ever before One evening mowing and watering he found this white razor sharp quartz arrowhead which had lain there I suppose since the red men of Paumanok were pushed out by the first Dutch commuters And that reminded me that literature is also sometimes a sharp and penetrating missile I think of that arrowhead to symbolize such l terature as to take on the grand scale a man like Voltaire or to take on a smaller but equally sharp-edged scale a Philadelphian brother of our own Logan Pearsall Smith in his *T ivia*

The fourth curios ty in this collection was a piece of fourteenth-century stained glass from Chartres Cathedral given me by the curator of that cathed al himself some years ago a piece of that rr producible fourteenth-century blue which many of us ha e seen in the west window of that famous building This wa one of the pieces of the old original glass which was broken when those noble windows were taken down and buried underground for safekeeping during the war As I

for the day may perhaps be collecting to sell again tomorrow In the case of those who collect for peace possibly one element of their pacification is the unworthy feeling that they have the best existing copy I hope that we are of those who collect for grace

I say to myself that one does not orate to his friends he talks with them And you must excuse certain informalities in these talks for the sincerity which I believe lies behind them.

I had never thought of myself as a collector until quite recently These unsought confessions have particular poignance for me at this time because now for the first time in ten years I am spending the winter in an apartment in the city divided from the books I know and love best except for a dozen or so which I had to choose as *ultima ratio* And therefore looking back around those shelves of mine from which I am momentarily separated and trying to think which of those well loved books I might mention to you I realized for the first time that perhaps I am more of a magpie more of a collector than I had supposed Going over those shelves *before leaving them for the winter I came upon a little card*board box the contents of which provide me with the symbolism I need for these talks In that cardboard box for a number of years it seems I had been putting away casual trivialities which seemed to me too precious to destroy and yet to an alien eye would have no meaning whatever In that box I found a great many old theatre ticket stubs of various colors I found buttons and broken buckles from wrist watch straps I found a piece of copper wire a piece of stained glass a silver mounted cork from a little set of four phials one of which got broken I found an Indian arrowhead and many other trivialities that I won t weary you with But I realized as I looked over those casual oddments that some instinct deeper than myself had caused me to put them away Every one of those queer items might be the theme of a story Put *together* they would compile a perhaps too embarrassing autobiography and looking over them in somewhat the mood of an executor for several dead selves I realized that I could take five or six of them and use them as what Stevenson calls moral emblems symbols of various moods which impel us to treasure great books

The first of these items that I symbolized in my mind was a piece of copper wire The full story of that piece of copper wire would be *too long to tell* Briefly it came from an old

telephone booth now dismantled out at Haverford College a telephone booth which during many undergraduate generations served as the only outlet of romance for a dormitory of young men For many years the inhabitants of that dormitory did all their telephoning to Bryn Mawr over that one piece of copper wire a portion of which I rescued when the booth was torn down last year And as you may imagine that copper wire now somewhat tarnished seems to show in its faded color signs of atomic fatigue When I think what naive and youthful electricities must have traversed that shining thread I am moved with a sentimental recollection and I say to myself that that wire can charmingly symbolize the function of literature as communication

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never be entirely eradicated Those books that I loved are in a sense my wild oats There is not one of them that does not ejaculate whole nervous systems of human relationship When we hear collectors speak of "association copies" they always mean books that have had some peculiarly complex relation with the author but let us not forget that we readers have our own associations which are probably more important to us than the distant associations of the author At any rate our associations are our own and no one can dictate them to us. Therefore I suggest we think for a few moments about our own association copies I suggest as employment for a pensive or a vacant mood that we trace the spiritual genealogy of the books that we ourselves have loved most When did we first read them or own them? By what strangely delayed and twisted approaches have we come upon the books that mean most to us?

I can't forget for example that it was in a little Russian bookshop on the East Side of New York City that I came upon one of the greatest of American testimonies Walt Whitman's *Prose* Neither schools nor colleges nor the more fashionable bookstores of the western avenues had ever brought it home to my business and bosom that Walt Whitman had written a volume of prose certainly as important as his poetry a book that we neglect at our intellectual peril

I was amused to notice when I was in Philadelphia one day last spring, that the old familiar arguments against Walt Whitman are still doing service Some robust Philadelphian wrote a letter in the *Public Ledger* protesting against Walt Whitman's having at length been admitted to the Hall of Fame I admit that being put in the Hall of Fame does not solve any of the perplexing problems that Walt Whitman presents both for the critic and for the citizen but at any rate it seems to me a step in the right direction But not so to this correspondent of the *Ledger* He says "Residents of this city remember Whitman simply as a picturesque lovable loafer who used to be seen on Market Street frequently with a market basket on his arm and sans necktie He was poseur as his life story will show shirked his responsibility wherever possible and the only thing that was commendable in his entire career was his work as a nurse during the Civil War" Naturally Philadelphia, the great textile city did not like the idea of Walt going without a necktie and similarly Walt's very generous hosts out in Germantown deplored as one of them told me Walt's habit of going into the bathroom after breakfast and staying there a long

Kenzie has helped to make more beautiful still with his wonderful Scottish American War Memorial Alexander Smith became the Secretary of Edinburgh University as a young man I think we may take it for granted that the lives of university executives are difficult and harassed At any rate we are told that he died of overwork and anxiety when he was just past the age of thirty-six But his book still lives among a few occasional readers

It is another Philadelphia footnote to remark that it was fifteen years after I first heard of that book before I actually saw it, when a generous Philadelphia collector Mr John C. Eckel the well known Dickens bibliographer gave me a copy of the first edition

Dr Johnson you remember used to pray to be delivered from vacillation and vagrancy of mind I reiterate that prayer but I am somewhat encouraged to remember that when I visited a library school in Wisconsin some months ago I first heard about the Dewey Decimal System which is the great intellectual crutch of the librarian profession The Dewey Decimals are those mysterious digits you find on library cards by which all kinds of literature are pigeon holed and classified And in a moment of morbid curiosity at the Wisconsin Library School I asked what was my classification number in the Dewey Decimal System and they told me it was 818 5 I didn t know whether to be cheered up or depressed I didn t know whether that was supposed to be reckoned on a scale of 1 000 being perfect or just what it meant so I inquired and they said, 818 5 means American Miscellaneous And of course the tragedy is that once you have been classified in that Dewey Decimal System you have to stay in that classification forever because naturally you can t ask the Library of Congress to reprint all those cards and the librarians all over the country to shift their classifications If you are once rated American Miscellaneous so you remain. I do feel at any rate that it gives one a sort of roving commission that atones for some apparent irrelevancy

In that box where those five symbolic relics were there were two other small objects that I haven t mentioned One was a pebble from the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean the other was a pebble from the bottom of a very small suburban pond. When my friend Captain David Bone the master of the Anchor Liner *Transylvania* is coming westward and gets on soundings somewhere near the Newfoundland Banks he puts down his lead line to see what the bottom is like At the base

of that lead as any of you who are seafaring men will know is a cup of tallow and that tallow brings up from the bottom bits of sand and shells or weed or small brown pebbles by which the sailor can calculate just about where he is That is a region where the weather is usually thick and you are more likely to know where you are by soundings than by taking the height of the sun Captain Bone had been collecting the best of those pebbles picked up on his many voyages to make a deep sea necklace for his daughter and he was kind enough to give me one of those small fragments from the bottom of the ocean as a souvenir of a voyage made with him It amused me to put beside that pebble another little fragment of white stone that I had found at the bottom of what I call Gissing Pond a very small suburban pool out in Long Island but which a certain partly human and partly canine character once mistook for the ocean itself If you put those two pebbles side by side certainly the more impressive of the two is the pebble from the bottom of Gissing Pond It is white and shiny it is a little bit larger than the Atlantic Ocean pebble and if you asked the average person which was the more important pebble he would pick the one from shallow water Is it not often just like that in our literary soundings? We cannot tell in our reveries about books whether the pebbles we are going to bring up may be from the bottom of a deep ocean or whether they may be only from a shallow suburban mere Perhaps in some ways one is as important as the other Do not forget that it is from hearsay of a small coral island that Shakespeare edified his magnificent fantasy of *The Tempest*

Having mentioned Gissing Pond it is only fair to explain that a little further I realized very well when I wrote a book using George Gissing s name for a character of somewhat enigmatic nature that it was an indefensible thing to do but that character would accept no other name I have often thought apologetically about this because I know that a good many readers have supposed that there might be some subtle satire intended There was none I had always been a great lover of George Gissing s books and it so happened that on the very day when one of Gissing s books *By the Ionian Sea* came to me our furnace man brought up from the village a small puppy in his pocket The dog was named Gissing He was a dog with somewhat theological overtones and he suggested a kind of *fairy tale which was begun for the amusement* of some children but which changed itself into something rather different But having been begun with that name

there seemed nothing else to be done about it. I admit that is not an important matter but I feel it is an apology or explanation that should be made

I first heard of George Gissing, also in one of Mr Mosher s book catalogues from Portland, Maine I remember very well the look of dismay that went around the editorial council of a large publishing house about sixteen years ago when I suggested that to put some of Gissing s novels back in print might be a worthy enterprise It is quite true that it would probably have been a failing venture but it is remarkable to see what a revival of interest in Gissing s somber talent there has been in the last fifteen or twenty years

One of the modern first editions which I think is most to be coveted is the 1903 first edition of Gissing s enchanting and enchanted book *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* If there are among you any thrice fortunate people who have not yet read *The P ivate Papers of Henry Ryecroft* one of the best loved of books among bibliophilic amateurs I can t tell you how much I envy you Only the other day one of those strange things happ ned that renew one s faith in the magnificence of chance I was in a small Italian restaurant down near Washington Square in New York. I don t like it to go into the record, but it was an illegitimate kind of restaurant, and in that part of that kind of restaurant where people stand in a row and where sometimes conversation unexpectedly becomes bright and lambent and candid among people who hadn t known each other before there was a lady who was as the phrase is telling the world about a book that had meant a very great deal in her life She had forgotten the title of the book and the name of the author but she was very eloquent on the subject of this book which had evidently had a great influence on her And suddenly another man and I who overheard her couldn t help breaking into the conversat on and saying I know what that book is and we told her the title She cried out in an ecstasy Ryecroft! That s it How I could have loved that man!

Well those a e the happy things that do occas onally occur I must not ident fy h r but she proved to be a person of importance and I couldn t help thinking to myself when she said How I could have loved that man how Gissing poor Giss ng needed it He had magnifi ent powers but those who have read his novels attentively have noticed that he never show that extrao dinary l beration of energies which is released when there are happy and understanding relations

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most enchanting comments on Thomas Hobbes person his life and his qualities I do think that *Leviathan* is one of the dozen or so greatest books in the English language It isn t very often that anybody mentions it, and if you do happen to mention it in casual conversation people will usually think you are speaking about a steamship

I don t want to go away from the topic of Gissing s work too fast, because I like to imagine that in my interest in him there have been some hereditary influence at work. My grand father was at one time one of the directors of the London publishing house of Chapman and Hall Dickens s publishers—a fellow director of his, incidentally was Anthony Trollope I never could find out that either my grandfather or Anthony Trollope really did much hard work in connection with that publishing house but it always pleased me very much to remember that in a scrapbook kept by my grandfather there is a letter to him from the reader of the publishing house whose name was George Meredith There is a note in my grand father s scrapbook from George Meredith asking him to read very carefully the manuscript of a novel by a young novelist in whom Meredith discerned much promise The name of that young novelist was Thomas Hardy Meredith in his career as a publisher s reader turned down a number of books that afterward became famous *E ewh n* was one *The Heavenly Twins* was another and some novels by Ouida even an early novel I am pleased to remember by Bernard Shaw was turned down by him. And if you have ever tried to read any of Bernard Shaw s novels you will sympathize with Mered th.

Incidentally in a very enchanting book called *A Hund d Years of Publishing* by Arthur Waugh you will find a most entertaining description of George Meredith as Chapman and Hall s reader He always wore lavender gloves to read manu scripts He usually wore a gray checked su t, very neat and beautifully cut. H s crisp gray hair his lavender gloves his gray suit, and always his bright scarlet tie were said to make a very profound impress on upon the lady authors of his publishing house who would rather they said be turned down by George Mered th than be accepted by any other publisher And one of my own perverse reasons for pride is that a novel written by an uncle of mine was turned down by George Meredith

But although he turned down many admirable things two authors in fact three authors to whom he gave their first substantial [illegible] ment. were three so diverse writers as

between the two halves of humanity—I won t be so ungallant as to say the two halves I will say the two divisions One reason why *Ryecroft* is so fascinating a book is that it was written at the end of his life when after years of bitter struggle and disappointment happier conditions made it possible for some of his natural sweetness to show through

Gissing is one of the few authors for whom I have ever deliberately gone to the dealers in rarity and bought first editions I actually paid $15 00 for my first edition in three volumes of *The Odd Women* one of the novels of his prime As a footnote I might say for the confusion of wealthier col lectors that I have very rarely paid more than that for any book and the books which are most precious to me have usually cost me very little One of my marginalia on this *course is the suggestion that we should bear in mind* that it it often advisable to collect the contents of books rather than their bibliographic quiddities

I think as I say it is only once or twice that I have paid more than $15 00 for any book I did pay $25 00 for my *Religio Medici (of course not a first edition but the fifth* which I believe was the first to contain Sir Kenelm Digby s lively *Observations*) I paid only $15 00 for my first edition of Hobbes *Leviathan* one of the greatest books of the seven teenth century It is a genuine perfect first with the exception *that the binding has been repaired I* paid as much as $22 50 for my first edition of Thomas Fuller s *The Holy State and the Profane State* an absolutely faultless unmended copy of 1642 Those two books the *Leviathan* and the Fuller are two of the masterpieces of the seventeenth century which have *not been made fashionable by the collecting moguls If they* had been taken up by modern fuglemen you would have to pay twenty or perhaps fifty times as much Those two books can be got at somewhere near the prices I have mentioned or even lower from any really intelligent seventeenth-century bookseller *(I mean a bookseller who specializes in the seven teenth century*)

I don t like to see the whole profession the whole group of collectors going in lockstep down the road that has been blasted for them by some distinguished amateur and it is saddening *to me sometimes* to see how few collectors there are who try to blaze a trail along their own tastes and intui tions If for example you should find yourself interested in Hobbes *Leviathan* look up John Aubrey the seventeenth century compiler of biographical who wrote the

and young man were Robert Louis Stevenson and Joseph Conrad I want to say something about Stevenson later and the curious continuity that exists in my own mind at any rate between Stevenson and Conrad But the fictional passion of my heart, the last fifteen or twenty years has been my love of Conrad and it pleases me to remember that I have signed in his own hand, a copy of his book which was dearest to himself *The M rror of the Sea*

Although Conrad had voyaged practically everywhere else it was not until 1923 only a year before his death that he crossed the western ocean He came as a passenger in Captain Bone s ship the *Tuscania* and his fellow passenger on that voyage was the Captain s brother Muirhead Bone the great artist. The finest portrait that has ever been done of Conrad was the etching Muirhead Bone did on shipboard when The Old Ulysses as he called him sat up in his red dressing gown in the cabin through all hours of the night and talked about his adventures over the seven seas That marvelous etching by Bone shows the old mandarin outlines of that noble head and that curiously tilted Slavic face

When Conrad arrived in New York in Captain Bone s ship Captain Bone did as shipmasters should do he made out what they call an inward manifest that is a statement of his most valuable cargo and in a copy of *The Mi o of th Sea* which I happened to have in my pocket when I went down to meet the ship Captain Bone wrote Duly delivered in the port of New York in good cond tion Captain Joseph Conrad— Signed David W Bone Master Conrad saw him doing this and although I would not have asked him for an inscription he was kind enough to witness t himself The first essay in that enchanting book *Th M or of the Sea* is called you remember Landfalls and Departures The sailor s landfall, you know is his first sight of land after a voyage when he falls in with the land and Mui head Bone in that same copy of the book put in a very beautiful little water-color painting of the Fire Island Lightship which was Conrad s first landfall in North America.

Conrad s career aises the profoundest problems of con sciousness and of literary art and the problem as to whether he was sp ritually a P le a Frenchman or an Englishman. Some of the problems raised by his work we can t d spatch in a moment and certainly one would not speak just casually of one of the great spirits of our time but I would like to remind you since t is the anniversary of the day on which

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH born in Knoxville in 1893 was graduated from the Univers ty of Tennessee in 1913 A long career at Columbia University started with graduate study in 1916 and continued for almost forty years. He was married in 1923 and during the year 1930-31 he was a Guggenheim fellow From 1925 to 195 he was dramatic critic and a member of the ed torial board of *Th N tion* He has lectured at Vassar and the New School for Soc al Research, has been pres dent of the New York Drama Crit cs Circle, was o e of the founders of the Literary Guild of America. He is the author of a d verse dozen or more books including *Th Mode n T mpe* (1929) *Experience nd Art* (193) *Th Ame ic n D ma S ce 1918* (1939) and *M asu of Man* (1954) (which won the National Book Award for nonfi tion) He has written scholarly b ograph es—of Poe (1926) Samuel Johnson (1944) Thoreau (1948)—and has ed t d the plays of Congr ve nd Eugene O'Neill, a translation of Mar el Proust s *Rememb anc of Th gs Past* and *S l t d Lett rs of Thomas G y H* has also written nature essays (he was the 1954 winner of the John Burroughs medal for excellence in n ture writing) wh ch include *The D ert Yea* (1952) and *Th B st f T o Wo lds* (1953) These two olumes w re preceded by *Th Tw l e S asons* (1949) in which are cons dered both the aspect of nature as xh bited in Conne ticut and the relationship of man to th universe The following selection is this volume s opening essay

April The Day of the Peepers

Hyl rucif is what the b ologists call him but to most of us he is simply the Spring Peeper The popularizers of natural history ha e by no means neglected h m but even without their a d he has m de him elf known to many whose only wild flo er is the da sy and whose only bird is the rob n Everyone who has e er visit d the country in the spring has heard him trill ng from the marsh at twil ght, and though few have ever caught ight of him most know that he is a little inch long frog who has just awaked from his winter sleep In southern Connecticut he u ually beg ns to p pe on some day between

his mastery of ships and the sea was officially authenticated of a few words that I myself have rarely been able to read without a moistening of the eye They were written by Cunninghame Graham just after Conrad s death and please note the marvelously touching art with which in this little brief tribute Cunninghame Graham introduces into this obituary of a great sailor technical sea terms

The rain had cleared and the sun poured down upon us as in procession we bore the coffin to the grave The semi circle of Scotch firs formed as it were a little harbor for him The breeze blew freshly sou west by south a little westerly A good wind as I thought to steer up channel by and one that he who would no longer feel it on his cheek looking aloft to see that the sails were drawing properly must have been glad to carry when he struck soundings passing the Wolf Rock after foul weather in the bay Handsomely as he who lay in it might well have said they lowered the coffin down The priest had left his Latin and said a prayer or two in English and I was glad of it for English surely was the speech the master mariner most loved and honored in the loving with new graces of his own All was well chosen for his resting place and so we left him with his sails all duly furled ropes flemished down and with the anchor holding truly in the kind Kentish earth until the judgment day The gulls will bring him tidings as they fly past above his grave

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April: The Day of the Peepers

Hyla crucifer is what the biologists call him, but to most of us he is simply the Spring Peeper. The popularizers of natural history have by no means neglected him, but even without their aid he has made himself known to many whose only wild flower is the daisy and whose only bird is the robin. Everyone who has ever visited the country in the spring has heard him trilling from the marsh at twilight, and though few have ever caught sight of him most know that he is a *little* inch-long frog who has just awaked from his *winter* sleep. In southern Connecticut he usually begins to pipe on some day between

another with a wild surprise It has happened again though there was nothing during the long months that passed to support our conviction that it could and would

We had, to be sure the waiting pages of our calendars marked June July and even of all things August" The sun, so the astronomers had assured us had turned northward on a certain date and theoretically had been growing stronger day by day But there was, often enough, little in the mercury of our thermometers or the feel of our fingers to confirm the fact. Many a March day had felt colder than the milder days of February And merely astronomical seasons have after all, very little relation to any actual human experience either as visible phenomena or as events bringing with them concomitant earthly effects

Not one man out of a hundred thousand would be aware of the solstices or the equinoxes if he did not see their dates set down in the almanac or did not read them in the news paper They cannot be determined without accurate instruments and they correspond to no phenomena he is aware of But the year as we live it does have its procession of recurring events and it is a curious commentary on the extent to which we live by mere symbols that ten men know that the spring equinox occurs near the twenty first of March to one who would give you even the approximate date when the peepers begin in his community and that remains true even if he happens to be a countryman and even if he usually remarks year after year when they do begin

It is true that the Day of the Peepers is a movable feast. But so is Easter which—as a matter of fact—can come earlier or later by just about the same number of days that on the calendar I have kept separates the earliest from the latest date upon which *Hyla c ucifer* begins to call Moreover the earliness or the lateness of the peepers means something as the earliness or the lateness of Easter does not

Whatever the stars may say or whatever the sun s altitude may be spring has not begun until the ice has melted and life begun to stir aga n Your peeper makes a calculation which would baffle a meteorologist He takes into consideration the maximum to which the temperature has risen the minimum to which it has fallen during the night, the relative length of the warmer and the colder periods besides no doubt other factors hard to get down in tables or charts But at last he ent has ... een just warm

have missed their attempt to determine when Easter will be because they consulted a lay calendar to find the full moon instead of concerning themselves with the Epact and con sidering the theoretical ecclesiastical full moon rather than the actual one How much easier it is to celebrate the Day of the Peepers instead and how much more meaningful too! On that day something miraculous and full of promise has ac tually happened and that something announces itself in no uncertain terms

Over any astronomically determined festival the Day of the Peepers has moreover another advantage even greater than the simplicity with which it defines itself or the actuality of its relation to the season it announces for *Hyla crucifer* is a sentient creature who shares with us the drama and the exultation who indeed sings our hosannahs for us The music of the spheres is a myth to say that the heavens rejoice is a pathetic fallacy but there is no missing the rejoicings from the marsh and no denying that they are something shared Under the stars we feel alone but by the pond side we have company

To most, to be sure Hyla is a *vox et p ate a nihil* Out of a thousand who have heard him hardly one has ever seen him at the time of his sin ing or recognized him if perchance he has happened by pure accident to see squatting on the branch of some shrub the tiny inch long creature gray or green ac cording to his mood and with a dark cross over his back But it was this tiny creature who some months before had con gregated with his fellows in the cold winter to s ng and make love No one could possibly humanize him as one humanizes a pet and so come to feel that he belongs to us rath r than— what is infinitely more important—that we both equally be long to something more nclusive than ourselves

Like all the reptiles and the amphibians he has an aspect which is inscrutable and antediluvian His thoughts must be inconceivably d fferent from ours and his joy hardly less so But the fact is comforting rather than the reverse for if we are nevertheless somehow united with him in that vast cate gory of l v ng things which is so sharply cut off from every thing that does not l e at all then we realize how broad the base of the category is how much besides ourselves is as it were on our side O er aga nst the atoms and the stars are set both men and frogs Life is not something entrenched in man alone in a creature who has not been here so very long and

mathematician not the creator of things seen and heard and felt. As he is taught to trust less and less the evidence of the five senses with which he was born he lives less and less in the world which they seem to reveal more and more with the concepts of physics and biology Even his body is no longer most importantly the organs and muscles of which he is aware but the hormones of which he is told

The very works of art that he looks at when he seeks delight through the senses are not longer representations of what the eye has seen but constructions and designs—or in other words another order of abstractions It is no wonder that for such a one spring should come not when the peepers begin but when the sun crosses the equator or rather—since that is only a human interpretation of the phenomenon—when the inclined axis of the earth is for an instant pointed neither toward nor away from the sun but out into space in such a way that it permits the sun s rays to fall upon all parts of the earth s surface for an equal length of time For him astronomy does not as it did for primitive man represent the one successful attempt to intellectualize and render abstract a series of natural phenomena It is instead merely one more of the many systems by which understanding is substituted for experience

Surely one day a year might be set aside on which to celebrate our ancient loyalties and to remember our ancient origins And I know of none more suitable for that purpose than the Day of the Peepers "Spring is come!" I say when I hear them and "The most ancient of Christs has risen! But I also add something which for me at least is even more important

Don t forget, I whisper to the peepers 'we are all in this together

Archives in Washington would actually have been as innocent as it might have *looked* damning

It would have shown me in the company of Mrs. Nichols head of the information desk at the State War and Navy Building (a psychic lady I had known since I was six) George P Martin, proprietor of the Post Café and Mrs. Rabbit his assistant Frank Farrington, a movie actor who had played the part of a crook named Brame in 'The Million Dollar Mystery' and Jack Bridges, a Los Angeles air mail flier and Hispano-Suiza expert. I doubt if any such photographs even one showing me borrowing twenty dollars from Bridges half an hour after meeting him for the first time in my life would have shaken Mr Shand s confidence in me.

Mr Shand called me to his office about a week before I was to sail for France and the Paris Embassy He was a tall quiet courteous gentleman and he had only one question to ask me He wanted to know if all my grandparents had been born in the United States I said yes he wished me Godspeed we shook hands and I left. That s all there was to it Waking up at night now and looking back on it I sometimes wonder how I would have come out of one of those three men inquisitions the Department was caught conducting last year Having as great a guilt sense as any congressman and a greater tendency to confession it might have taken me hours to dredge up out of my mind and memory all the self indictments that must have been there I believed then and still do that generals of the Southern Confederacy were in the main superior to generals of the Northern armies I suspected there were flaws in the American political system I doubted the virg n birth of United States senators I thought that German cameras and English bicycles were better than ours and I denied the existence of actual proof that God was exclusively a citizen of the United States But, as I say Mr Shand merely asked me about my grandparents, and that was all I realize now that, as a measure of patriotism the long existence of my ancestors on American soil makes me more loyal than Virginia Dare or even George Washington but I didn t give it any thought at the time.

Before I sailed on the S S Orizaba a passenger ship converted into an Army transport and looking rather sheepish about it I was allowed to spend four days in Columbus Ohio and my mother has preserved for reasons known only to mothers a snapshot taken of me on the last day of my leave

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The subject of the photograph is obviously wearing somebody else s suit which not only convicts him of three major faults in a code clerk—absent mindedness carelessness and peccability—but gives him the unwonted appearance of a saluki who through some egregious mischance of nature has exchanged his own ears for those of a barn owl If this would not be enough to cause a special agent to phone Hoover per sonally *regarde* as the French Sûreté would say excitedly *the figure of this alarming indiscret* His worried expression indicates that he has just mislaid a code book or what is worse has sold one Even Mr Hoover s dullest agent could tell that the picture is that of a man who would be putty in the hands of a beautiful or even a dowdy female spy The subject s curious but unmistakable you ask me and I'll tell you look shows that he would babble high confidences to low companions on his third *pernod à l eau* This man could even find some way to compromise the Department of Agriculture, let alone the Department of State

The picture would have aroused no alarm in the old days however for it was almost impossible to be a security risk in the State Department in 1918 no matter how you looked All our code books except one were quaint transparencies dating back to the time when Hamilton Fish was Secretary of State under President Grant and they were intended to save words and cut telegraph costs not to fool anybody The new code book had been put together so hastily that the word America" was left out and code groups so closely paralleled true read ings that LOVVE for example was the symbol for love

Whatever slight illusion of secrecy we code clerks may have had was dispelled one day by a dour gentleman who announced that the Germans had all our codes It was said that the Germans now and then got messages through to Wash ington taunting us about our childish ciphers and suggesting on one occasion that our clumsy device of combining two codes in a desperate effort at deception would have been a little harder if we had used two other codes which they named This may have been rumor or legend like the story current at the time that six of our code books were missing and that a seventh neatly wrapped firmly tied and accom panied by a courteous note had been returned to one or an other of our embassies by the Japanese either because they had finished with it or because they already had one

A system of deception as easy to see through as the passing attack of a grammar school football team naturally produces

a cats-out-of the-bag attitude In enciphering messages in one code, in which the symbol for quote was (to make up a group) "ZOXIL, we were permitted to use UNZOXIL" for "unquote, an aid to perspicuity that gave us code clerks the depressing feeling that our tedious work was merely an exer cise in block lettering The Department may have comforted itself with the knowledge that even the most ingenious and complex codes could have been broken down by enemy cipher experts. Unzoxilation just made it a little easier for them

Herbert O Yardley one time chief cryptographer of the War Department, warned the government in a book published nearly twenty years ago that the only impregnable codes are those whose pattern is mechanically jumbled in transmission by a special telegraphic method that reassembles the pattern at the point of reception. To prove his point, Yardley revealed how he had broken the toughest Japanese code five years be fore The government must have taken his advice I doubt that we could have got through a second world war shouting ZOXIL Here we come ready or not UNZOXIL

The State Department, in the happy go-lucky tradition of the time forgot to visa my special diplomatic passport, and this was to cause a tremendous *brouhaha* later on when the French discovered I was loose in their country without the signs seals and signatures they so devoutly respect. The captain of the Orizaba wanted nothing to do with me when I boarded his ship whether my passport was visaed or not H had no intention of taking orders from the State De partment or carrying its code clerks and who the hell was Robert Lansing anyway? He finally let me stay on board after I had bowed and scraped and touched my forelock for an hour but he refused to monkey around getting my trunk on board When I received t in Paris more than a year later everyth ng in it was covered with the melted chocolate of a dozen Hershey bars I had tucked in here and there

I had been instructed to report to Colonel House at the Hotel Crillon when I got to Paris but I never saw him I saw instead an outraged gentleman named Auchincloss who plainly regarded me as an unsucce sfully com c puppet in a crude and inexcusable pra tical joke He said bitterly that code clerks had been showing up for days that Colonel House d d not want even one code clerk let alone twelve or fifteen and that I was to go on over to the Embassy where I belonged The explanation was I think as simple as it was monument l. Several weeks before the State Department in

Washington had received a cablegram from Colonel House in Paris urgently requesting the immediate shipment of twelve or fifteen code clerks to the Crillon where headquarters for the American Peace Delegation had been set up It is plain to me now what must have happened Colonel House s cablegram must have urgently requested the immediate shipment of twelve or fifteen code books not code clerks The cipher groups for books and clerks must have been nearly iden tical say DOGEC and DOGED and hence a setup for the telegraphic garble Thus if my theory is right the single letter D sent me to Paris when I had originally been slated for Berne Even after thirty years the power of that minuscule *slip of the alphabet* gives me a high sense of insecurity A D" for a C sent Colonel House clerks instead of books and sent me to France instead of Switzerland On the whole I came off far better as events proved than the Colonel did There I was in Paris with a lot of jolly colleagues and there was Colo nel House up to his ears in code clerks but without any code books or at least not enough to handle the flow of cablegrams to and from the Crillon when the Peace Conference got under way

That tiny D was to involve the State Department the Paris Embassy the Peace Conference and in a way that would have delighted Gilbert and Sullivan the United States Navy in a magnificent comic opera of confusion An admiral of the Navy for some reason (probably because he had a lot of Navy code books) arbitrarily took over at the Crillon the State Department s proud *prerogative* of diplomatic communication and a code shambles that might have perplexed Herbert Yard ley himself developed when cablegrams in Navy codes were dispatched to the State Department in Washington which could not figure them out and sent back bewildered and frantic queries in State Department codes which the admiral and his aides could not unravel The Navy has always been proud of its codes, and the fact that they couldn t be broken by the State Department only went to show how strong they were but when communication between the Peace Conference and Washington came to a dead stop the admiral agreed to a com promise His clerks young and eager junior lieutenants would use the State Department codes This compounded the con fusion since the lieutenants didn t know how to use the strange codes The dozen State Department clerks Colonel House had turned away and now badly needed were finally sent for after a month but even then they were forced [illegible] under

supervision of the Navy The Great Confusion was at last brought to an end when the desperate State Department finally turned to a newspaperman for help and assigned him to go and get its stolen power of diplomatic communication and bring it back where it belonged Not since an American battleship many years before in firing a twenty-one gun salute in honor of the President of France had accidentally used real shells and blown the bejeezus out of the harbor of Le Havre had the American Navy so royally loused up a situation And think of it—a "DOGEC" for a "DOGED" would have sent me to Berne where nothing at all ever happened.

The last time I saw the old building at 5 Rue de Chaillot, that housed the chancery of the American Embassy when I was a code clerk was in 1937 Near the high, grilled door a plaque proclaimed that Myron T Herrick was our Ambassador during the first World War thus perpetuating a fond American misconception and serving as a monument to the era of the Great Confusion. The truth is that Herrick served during only the first four months of the war and from December 1914 until after the war in 1919 an unsung man named William M Sharp was our Ambassador to France This note of bronze fuzziness cheered me in a peculiar way It was a brave, cockeyed testament to the enduring strength of a nation that can get more ingloriously mixed up than any other and somehow gloriously come out of it in the end

As I stood there before the old chancery I remembered another visit I had made to 5 Rue de Chaillot, in 1925 and for the convenience of the F B I who must already have twenty three exhibits to fling at me when I am called up before some committee or other I offer my adventure in 1925 as Exhibit X. Myron Herrick was once more our Ambassador to France and I was granted an interview with him, or as Counsellor Sheldon Whitehouse insisted on call ng it, an audience I had given up d plomacy for journalism as I used to explain it, and I needed material for an article I was writing about Herrick for an American newspaper I decided I ought to have a l ttle art to go along with the story such as a photograph of the Ambassador's office a large bright, well appointed room on the second floor facing the street. I knew I couldn t get official permission to take a p cture of the room but this didn t discourage me I had discovered that the same old French conci g lived in the same rooms on the ground floor of the chancery nd controlled the opening of the great, grilled door Remembering that Sunday had always been an off day with a

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skeleton staff in charge I picked out a clear sunny Sabbath for my exploit I went to the chancery and pushed the bell and the *concierge* clicked the lock from her room I went in said *Bonjour Madame* went upstairs photographed the Ambassador s office came down again having been challenged by nobody said *Bonjour Madame* to the *concierge* raised my hat politely and went away

The Republicans were in charge of the Embassy then not the Democrats as in my code-clerk days but things hadn t changed much I am a pretty good hand at time exposures and the photograph came out well There is still a print of it in the art morgue of an American newspaper or ought to be but it is merely a view of a room in the home of whatever French family now lives at 5 Rue de Chaillot

We probably learned a lot during the recent war and I doubt if tourists with cameras could get into any of our Embassies today If this belated confession makes it a bit harder for them anyway I shall be very happy indeed I must close now since somebody is knocking at the door Why it s a couple of strange men! Now what in the world could *they* want with me?

EDMUND WILSON

EDMUND WILSON born in 1895 in Red Bank, N J was educated at Princeton from which he was graduated in 1916 Immediately after college he became for a year a reporter on the *New York Evening Sun* Army service in World War I then claimed him A return to civilian life brought the first of his four marriages and employment for a year (1920-21) as a managing editor of *Vanity Fair* His first book, co-authored with John Peale Bishop appeared a year later He has been writing and publishing volumes of verse, fiction, plays, studies of current affairs and essays in literary criticism continuously ever since. From 1926 to 1931 he was an associate editor of the *New Republic* and from 1944 to 1948 he was book reviewer for *The New Yorker* His fifth book, *Axel's Castle* (1931) brought him to the forefront of American literary critics In the next year he published *The American Jitters—A Year of the Slump* This was followed five years later by *Travels in Two Democracies* and, in 1940 by *To the Finland Station* Between them came *This Room and This Gin and These Sandwiches* (1937) a volume of plays In 1946 his book of stories *Memoirs of Hecate County* elicited both praise and such scandalized disapproval that it was withdrawn from sale Among his volumes of criticism have been *The Triple Thinkers* (1938) *The Wound and the Bow* (1941) *Classics and Commercials* (1950) largely composed of articles from *The New Yorker* and *The Shores of Light* (1952) a collection of reviews written for the *New Republic* during the 1920s and 1930s The following selection is taken from *The Boys in the Back Room* (1941) in the revised text included in *Classics and Commercials*

John Steinbeck

JOHN STEINBECK is also a native Californian, and he has occupied himself more with the life of the State than any of these other writers His exploration in his novels of the region of the Salinas Valley has been more tenacious and searching than anything else of the kind in our recent fiction, with the exception of Faulkner's exhaustive study of the State of Mississippi

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dogs In *The G apes of Wrath* the journey of the Joads is figured at the beginning by the progress of a turtle and is accompanied and parodied all the way by animals insects and birds When the expropriated sharecroppers in Oklahoma are compelled to abandon their farm we get an extended picture of the invasion of the house by the bats the weasels the owls the mice and the pet cats that have gone back to the wild Lennie in *Of Mice and Men* likes to carry around pet animals toward which as well as toward human beings he has murderous animal instincts The stories in *The Long Valley* are almost entirely about plants and animals and Mr Steinbeck does not give the effect as Lawrence or Kipling does of romantically raising the animals to the stature of human beings but rather of assimilating the human beings to animals *The Chrysanthemums The White Quail* and *The Snake* deal with women who identify themselves with, respectively chrysanthemums a white quail and a snake In *Flight* a young Mexican boy who has killed a man and run away into the mountains is finally reduced to a state so close to that of the beasts that he is apparently mistaken by a mountain lion for another four footed animal and in the fantasy *Saint Katy the Virgin* in which a vicious pig is made to repent and become a saint the result is not to dignify the animal as the *Little Flowe s of Saint F ancis* does for example with the wolf of Agubbio but to make human religion ridiculous

Nor does Steinbeck love his animals as D H Lawrence does The peculiar point of view is well analyzed in connection with Thomas Wayne in *To a God Unknown* He was not kind to animals at least no kinder than they were to each other but he must have acted with a consistency beasts could understand for all creatures trusted him Thomas liked an mals and understood them and he killed them with no more feeling than they had about kill ng each other He was too much an animal him elf to be sent mental And Steinbeck does not even dwell much as Law ence likes to do on the perfections of his various beasts each after its own kind It is the habits and behav or of the an mals not the impre sion they make that nterests him

The chief subject of Mr Steinbeck s fict on has been thus not those a pe ts of human ty in which it is most thoughtful, imag nat ve constru t e nor even those aspects of animals that seem most attract ve to humans but rather the processes of l fe itself In the o d nary course of nature living organisms are cont nually be ng dest oyed and among the principal things

And what has Mr Steinbeck found in this country he knows so well? I believe that his virtuosity in a purely technical way has tended to obscure his themes He has published eight volumes of fiction which represent a variety of forms and which have thereby produced an illusion of having been written from a variety of points of view *Tortilla Flat* was a comic idyl with the simplification almost of a folk tale *In Dubious Battle* was a strike novel centering around Communist organizers and following a fairly conventional pattern *Of Mice and Men* was a compact little drama contrived with almost too much cleverness and a parable which criticized humanity from a nonpolitical point of view *The Long Valley* was a series of short stories dealing mostly with animals in which poetic symbols were presented in realistic settings and built up with concrete detail *The Grapes of Wrath* was a propaganda novel full of preachments and sociological interludes and developed on the scale of an epic Thus attention has been diverted from the content of Mr Steinbeck s work by the fact that when his curtain goes up he always puts on a different kind of show

Yet there is in Mr Steinbeck s fiction a substratum which remains constant and which gives it a certain weight What is constant in Mr Steinbeck is his preoccupation with biology He is a biologist in the literal sense that he interests himself in biological research The biological laboratory in the short story called *The Snake* is obviously something which he knows at first hand and for which he has a strong special feeling and it is one of the peculiarities of his vocabulary that it runs to biological terms But the laboratory described in *The Snake* the tight little building above the water where the scientist feeds white rats to rattlesnakes and fertilizes starfish ova is also one of the key images of his fiction It is the symbol of Mr Steinbeck s tendency to present human life in animal terms

Mr Steinbeck almost always in his fiction is dealing either with the lower animals or with humans so rudimentary that they are almost on the animal level and the relations between animals and people are as intimate as those in the zoophile fiction of David Garnett and D H Lawrence The idiot in *The Pastures of Heaven* who is called Little Frog and Coyote shows his kinship with the animal world by continually making pictures of birds and beasts In *Tortilla Flat* there is the Pirate who lives in a kennel with his dogs and has practically forgotten human companionship In *In Dubious Battle* there is another character whose personality is confused with that of his

labor movement with radical leadership from most treatments of such subjects of its period is again the biological point of view The strike leaders here are Communists as they are in many labor novels but *In Dubious Battle* is not really based on the formulas of Communist ideology The kind of character produced by the Communist movement and the Communist strategy in strikes (of the Communism of the day before yesterday) is *described* by Mr Steinbeck and it is described with a certain amount of admiration yet the party member of *In Dubious Battle* does not talk like a Marxist of even the Stalinist revision The cruelty of these revolutionists though they are working for a noble ideal and must immolate themselves in the struggle is not palliated by the author any more than the cruelty of the half witted Lennie and we are made to feel all through the book that impressive though the characters may be they are presented primarily as examples of how life in our age behaves There is developed in the course of the story—especially by a fellow traveler doctor who seems to come closer than the Communist to expressing Mr Steinbeck s own ideas—a whole philosophy of group-man as an animal

"It might be like this Mac When group man wants to move he makes a standard God wills that we recapture the Holy Land or he says We fight to make the world safe for democracy or he says We will wipe out social injustice with communism But the group doesn t care about the Holy Land or Democracy or Communism Maybe the group simply wants to move to fight and uses these words simply to reassure the brains of individual men

How asks Mac do you account for people like me directing things moving things? That puts your group man out

You might be an effect as well as a cause Mac You might be an expression of group man a cell endowed with a special function like an eye cell drawing your force from group man and at the same time d recting him like an eye Your eye both takes orders from and gives orders to your bra n

This sn t practical objects Mac What s all this kind of talk got to do w th hungry men with lay-offs and unemployment?"

It might have a great deal to do with them It isn t a very long time since tetanus and lo kjaw were not conn ected There

that destroy them are the predatory appetite and the competitive instinct that are necessary for the very survival of eating and breeding creatures This impulse of the killer has been preserved in a simpleton like Lennie of *Of Mice and Men* in a form in which it is almost innocent and yet Lennie has learned from his more highly developed friend that to yield to it is to do something bad " In his struggle against the instinct, he loses Is Lennie bad or good? He is betrayed as the author implies all our human intentions are by the uncertainties of our animal nature And it is only as a rule on this primitive level that Mr Steinbeck deals with moral questions the virtues like the crimes for him are still a part of these planless and almost aimless of these almost unconscious processes. The preacher in *The Grapes of Wrath* is disillusioned with the human moralities and his sermon at the grave of Grampa Joad so lecherous and mean during his lifetime evidently gives expression to Mr Steinbeck s own point of view "This here ol man jus lived a life an jus died out of it I don t know whether he was good or bad but that don t matter much. He was alive an that s what matters An now he s dead an that don t matter Heard a fella tell a poem one time an he says All that lives is holy

The subject of *The Grapes of Wrath* which is supposed to deal with human society is the same as the subject of *The Red Pony* which is supposed to deal with horses loyalty to life itself The men who feel themselves responsible for having let the red pony die must make up for it by sacrificing the mare in order that a new pony may be brought into the world alive And so Rose of Sharon Joad with her undernourished baby born dead, must offer her milk in the desolate barn which is all she has left for a shelter to another wretched victim of famine and flood on the point of death from starvation To what end should ponies and Oakies continue to live on the earth? "And I wouldn pray for a ol fella that s dead the preacher goes on to say He s awright He got a job to do but it s all laid out for im an there s on y one way to do it But us we got a job to do an they s a thousan ways an we don know which one to take An if I was to pray it d be for the folks that don t know which way to turn

This preacher who has lost his religion does find a way to turn he becomes a labor agitator and this theme has already been dealt with more fully in the earlier novel *In Dubious Battle* But what differentiates Mr Steinbeck s picture of

Steinbeck s efforts to make them figure as heroic human sym bols, one cannot help feeling that these Okies too do not exist for him quite seriously as people It is as if human sentiments and speeches had been assigned to a flock of lemmings on their way to throw themselves into the sea One remembers the short story called *Johnny Bear* Johnny Bear is another of Stein beck s idiots h h s exactly the physique of a bear and seems in almost every way subhuman but he is endowed with an uncanny gift for reproducing with perfect mimicry the con versations he overhears, though he understands nothing of their human meaning

It is illuminating to look back from *The Grapes of W rath* to one of the earliest of Steinbeck s novels *To a God Unknown* In this book he is dealing frankly with the destru tive and re productive forces as the cardinal principles of nature In one passage the hero is described by one of the other characters as never having known a p rson You aren t aware of per sons, Joseph only people You can t see units Joseph only the whole He finds himself almost unconsciously and in co travention of Christia ity practicing a primitive nature cult, to whi h in time of terrible drought he sacrifices first his wife then himself as blood offerings to bring the rain This story though abs rd has a certain interest and it evidently represents, on the part of Steinbeck just turned thirty an honorably sincere attempt to find expression for his view of the world and his conception of the powers that move it When you husk away th mawkish erbiage from the people of his later novels you get down to a similar conception of a hu manity not of units but lumped in a whole to a vision equally grim in its cycles of extinction and renewal

Not, however that John Steinbeck s picture of human be ings as lemmings as grass that is left to die does not have its striking validity for the period in which we are living In our time Shakespeare s angry ape drest in his little authority seems to make of all the rest of mankind angry apes or cower ing rodents The one th ng that was imagined with intensity in Aldous Huxley s no el *Afte Many a Summ r Di s the Swan* was the eighteenth-century explo ter of the slave trade degen erating into a fetal anthropoid Many parts of the world are today being flooded with migrants like the Joads deprived of the d gnity of a human society forbidden the dignity of human work and made to flee from their houses like prairie-dogs n before a prairie fire Aldous Huxley has a good deal to our American Humanists d d abo it a fundamental

are still primitives in the world who dont know children are the result of intercourse Yes it might be worthwhile to know more about group man to know his nature his ends his desires They re not the same as ours The pleasure we get in scratching an itch causes death to a great number of cells. Maybe group-man gets pleasure when individual men are wiped out in a way

Later when the mob of striking fruit pickers begins to get out of hand the Communists themselves begin to think of them in these infra human terms

They re down there now God Mac, you ought to of seen them It was like all of them disappeared and it was just one big animal going down the road Just all one animal

The *animal* don t want the barricade I don t know what it wants Trouble is guys that study people always think it s men and it isn t men It s as different from men as dogs are. Jim it s swell when we can use it but we don t know enough. When it gets started it might do anything

So the old pioneer of *The Leader of the People* describes a westward migration which he himself once led as "a whole bunch of people made into one big crawling beast. Every man wanted something for himself but the big beast that was all of them wanted only westering

This tendency on Steinbeck s part to animalize humanity is evidently one of the causes of his relative unsuccess at creating individual humans The *paisanos* of *Tortilla Flat* are not really quite human beings they are cunning little living dolls that amuse us as we might be amused by pet guinea pigs squirrels or rabbits They are presented through a special convention which is calculated to keep them cut off from any kinship with the author or the reader *In The Grapes of Wrath* on the other hand Mr Steinbeck has summoned all his resources to make the reader feel his human relationship with the family of dis possessed farmers yet the result of this too is not quite real The characters of *The Grapes of Wrath* are animated and put through their paces rather than brought to life they are like excellent character actors giving very conscientious perform ances in a fairly well written play Their dialect is well man aged but they always sound a little stagy and in spite of Mr

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happy people it must be that turns for happiness here" The most serious criticism leveled against American civilization is not that its work is standardized and its business engulfing but that its pleasures are mechanical and its leisure slavish It is not that we have not time Foreign observers are repeatedly astonished at the number of hours an ever increasing number of Americans have to themselves It is not time we lack but leisure.

Leisure is indeed an affair of mood and atmosphere rather than simply of the clock. It is not a chronological occurrence but a spiritual state It is unhurried pleasurable living among one's native enthusiasms Leisure consists of those pauses in our lives when experience is a fusion of stimulation and repose Genuine leisure yields at once a feeling of vividness and a sense of peace It consists of moments so clear and pleasant in themselves that one might wish they were eternal

For traveled Americans at least, the best illustrations and memories of such experiences will come from abroad For one it will be the recollection of keen but casual conversation at tea on a lawn in Sussex or Surrey For another it will be the image of two friends chatting over coffee and liquors at an café table on a boulevard in Paris Another will remember a stroll in an Italian piazza or the long, dignified peace of an evening in a London club

It is not that one cannot find domestic images, too of a quality of leisure that seems to be passing almost completely out of the American scene Many a middle aged American in the midst of a life crowded with social as well as business or professional obligations will recall some rare hour that in its golden and gratuitous irrelevance seems to belong not in the realm of time but in the careless length of eternity an afternoon spent browsing without purpose in a library or walking without the thought of time or destination on the quiet windings of an unfrequented country road One recalls conversations lightly begun after dinner and meandering through wreaths of smoke into unexpected depths and intensities until long after an unnoticed midnight. One remembers some incredibly remote year when one wrote by hand a letter that flowed on as if ink and paper and ideas would never end.

But for Americans the word leisure has distinctively Old World associations. That is partly because some Americans have there known it best. Cut off from the pressure and compulsions of their normal occupations at home they have moved

down to being silly Between the foolish and the funereal we have managed to find no middle course

Of escapes from the pressure of an increasingly mechanized life to occasional outbursts of excitement or triviality there is much to be said. At least it may be said for them that they are natural, perhaps needful refuges from a world whose tightly woven days would otherwise be unbearable It is perhaps a sad commentary on the angular and constricted lives we lead that we should have to seek lurid or futile ways to peace But it is not to be wondered at that, living in such a world of routine we should plunge ever so often into the loud nonsense of inane parties wallow in the absurd pathos and comedy of the screen or fall enraptured victims to successive crazes of footless puzzles and dull games We may be forgiven our excursions to musical comedies without wit or music and conversational evenings without humanity or ideas The contemporary citizen is vexed beyond his own realization by the humdrum unthrilling pressure of his days he craves naturally now and then an opportunity to be trivial irresponsible and absurd.

But the irony of our situation lies in the fact that even when we try to escape into triviality or foolishness we make a serious and standardized business of it. One can pardon occasional madness in a sober civilization but there is something pathetic, almost ghastly in soberly making madness a routine The half drunken gayety that has become the accompaniment of much respectable social life is a sad determined business Orgy has become a social obligation dissipation a prescription to the weary the repressed and the disenchanted It becomes as much a social obligation to play a new game or have a new thrill as to read a new book or wear a current collar or hat. Any number of n ce people go systematically about becoming on occasion trivial fool sh or mad It is as if the American could not stop be ng effic ent when he wanted to and had to be gay or trivial or ecstatic with the same thoroughness and strained energy with which he might build a business or a skyscraper

There are other reasons bes des our own solemn efficiency that have been transforming our attempts to amuse ourselves into pale and tanda d out n s The same forces that have gone into the big bus n ss of providing our necessities have
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with freedom amid the grace of a leisurely tradition But there is a deeper reason which lies in the contrast between that European tradition and our own The quality of leisure in Europe is partly the heritage of a long leisure-class tradition, partly the patience of peoples that have the sense of age and are not obsessed with hastening toward the new and building the possible in a hurry In our own civilization originally and in spirit partly pioneer there is a working rather than a leisure-class tradition and the impress and atmosphere of work have come to control our lives even when we are not working To be busy has been with us a primary virtue and even our play has had to find a place for itself as a kind of business

A number of years ago Professor Veblen in his "Theory of the Leisure Class tried to point out how the traditions and interests of a leisure class had shaped our tastes and our morals A quite plausible volume might be written on the thesis that the pursuit of leisure in our civilization is determined by our traditions of work we carry the morals and ideals of an essentially industrial essentially business civilization over into our play Leisure—a quiet and emancipated absorption in things and doings for their own sake—has always seemed to us effeminate and exotic We wish leisure for relief for release for escape for instruction enlightenment or advancement. There is something immoral about moments that are good in themselves There is probably no other country in the world where idleness is one of the deadly sins

With us therefore leisure has been a melodramatic escape into self improvement We oscillate between night clubs and outlines of culture Every one has at some time or other been present at a determinedly gay party He has seen ordinarily quiet intelligent people become wilfully noisy and stupid He has seen men and women separately delightful and entertaining prance about loudly screaming vulgarities acting the grown up babies of the age And his pain has been increased by a sense that none of these people cared to do the silly things they were doing They drank more than they really wished to and uttered hiccoughing nonsense that they themselves despised

Every one likewise has listened to a group of people at dinner or afterwards talk with obligatory boredom about the modish books and plays and ideas Spontaneity which is of the essence of any truly spiritual life flies out of the conversation and out of the window when culture becomes deliberate We settle down as grimly to being serious as we settle

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may talk as one will about the possible high art of the moving picture marvel as one will at the new mechanical perfections of the phonograph There is no question but that these are at their best mechanical They turn our leisure into a passive receptivity of standard mediocre amusement They provide almost nothing of that spontaneous sense of individual living which is part of the repose and stimulation of leisure It is not pleasant to realize that our leisure is taking on the color—or colorlessness—of the rest of our lives that we are becoming stereotypes in our play as in our work The most serious spiritual danger of the Industrial Revolution is that it has come to mechanize and industrialize not merely things but the spirit as well

When a man is at leisure we like to say he is free to be himself but if his freedom consists in efficiently amusing himself according to the standard formulas or subjecting himself to the passive reception of standard amusements he is not free at all

But while leisure has in one direction gone toward conventional amusement and stereotyped triviality in another direction it has become a kind of elegant overtime work The latest use we have found for leisure is to make it useful Its usefulness which might have been supposed to be that it was a good in itself has been transformed into its possibility as a means of systematic self improvement Correspondence courses outlines of knowledge scrapbooks of learning—agencies not always disinterested—have been trying to teach us what we might do with our unharnessed moments if only we would harness them A little less carousal and a little less bridge and we might become heirs to all of Western culture or experts in philosophy or French There is a revealing irrelevance in the reasons assigned for turning the casual moments of our lives to the pursuit of knowledge It is not that knowledge will render us self possessed and whole that it will give wings to our imagination and give a larger clearer and sweeter horizon to our lives It is that knowledge or a smattering of it will make us successful or respected that a veneer of garbled French will reveal our breeding or a parade of the names of philosophers testify to our intellectual curiosity There is possibly no clearer index to the remoteness of a native American culture than the eager indiscriminate voracity with which Americans gobble up tabloid versions of fields of expert knowledge Far from meaning that we have turned to the love of wisdom it means that we have turned our idle hours into the hurried

business of getting short cuts to knowledge Outlines simply are a way of applying efficiency to culture as well as to business Their very essence is to say that here is all philosophy or history or literature for those who have not the patience or sympathy to explore any corner of any of them with disinterested delight. Worst of all, they have taken from leisure its saving essence—the sense of doing some lovely thing for its own lovable sake

There are aristocratic pessimists in our midst who hold that leisure in the sense of a fine spontaneous use of free time is increasingly impossible in America. They point to the facts cited in the foregoing and to other equally distressing social habits The omnipresence of the automobile is not simply a temptation to literal speed, but has come to be a symbol for speed in spiritual matters as well The only excitement in any activity even in the pursuit of truth, is the excitement of going fast. It is for that reason they insist, that there is no country where ideas become popular so fast as in America, no country where half learned they are so quickly outmoded and forgotten. A book is the book of a month or at most a season, and the rapid transit reader comes to forswear books for the reviews of them and forswear reviews for excerpts from them in a synthetic magazine

It is pointed out again, and with justice, that the multiplication of physical luxuries and physical distractions is a constant intruder upon that collectedness of spirit in which alone leisure can come to being Serenity and integrity are menaced as much by the telephone as by any single invention of the last century Long quiet waves of time have become almost impossible in evenings shattered by radios by movies, and by the constant seduction and noise of the automobile Speculation begins in a dreaming fantasy meditation in reverie In our contemporary urban world one almost never has a chance to achieve that half-drowsy detachment in which fantasy and reverie begin. We are kept too wide awake ever to be really at peace or in thought. Finally in a country where there is still a glamorous sense of unlimited opportunity the desire for first place makes almost impossible that freedom and detachment, which leave one free to follow an impulse for its own self rewarding delight.

The desire for speed the desire for luxury the desire for first place—these are indeed three deadly enemies of leisure In the current movement of American life there is not much

prospect of radically overcoming them But there are portents of a change in our point of view that may portend a radical change in our practice

There are growing evidences of a hunger for quiet and unhurried living among an increasing number of Americans One cannot—nor would one—abolish the telephone or the automobile There is no use in sighing for an anachronistic Paradise It is impossible to transform life in New York in the twentieth century into the retirement of a rectory in Kent in the eighteenth One cannot in the noise and hurry of a Western metropolitan winter pretend one is living in the timeless unconcern of an Eastern tropical island

But part of our difficulty lies not in the impossibility of our circumstances but in the blindness of our philosophy If we once learned to rediscover the values of quiet spaces in our lives we should find a way to find them There is time to be had even in New York or Chicago and solitude even among crowds One need not follow Thoreau into the wilderness to practice his isolation nor Buddha into the desert to achieve his meditation There is peace in a city apartment if one will but stay at home an evening to find it and Nirvana to be found at home in one s own mind

Ultimately the lack of leisure is lack of spiritual integration We flee to society dull though it be through the fear of the greater dullness of being alone We hurtle along at a breakneck speed physically and spiritually for fear of the drabness and futility we might feel if we slowed down Any number of people are suddenly becoming aware of that situation and honest with themselves are beginning to realize how much leisure one might have if one had enough faith in one s own resources One need not let life be shattered into a splintered busyness by a routine absorption into social evenings which give one a standard good time The rediscovery of solitude is being made by Americans and with that rediscovery come many other delightful things the chance to do nothing at all not even talk and the chance out of that interlude to follow a fancy or meditate a dream Many a good citizen, given a chance to be alone with himself for an evening might discover for the first time the quality of his own character the contours of taste and interest that make him a personality as well as a jobholder and taxpayer In such an interval a man may discover a hobby that will be for him a substitute for creative genius He may not paint write or compose but he

may learn to do something indelibly himself and make something incredibly his own.

But in the golden days of leisure in the spacious and graceful society of the Renaissance or the English country house obviously men and women did not retire into their own souls away from the stimulation of other people Good conversation is certainly on of the most enlivening ways of leisure and good conversation is something between solemnity and absurdity In America, of late we have had to choose between talking on subjects solemnly and schematically or babbling nonsense doing anything rather than talk. We are I think, beginning to learn again the joy of conversation, a light and easy play of minds and tempers over common human themes. We have grown a little weary of talk that is all smart and burnished we have grown tired too of talk that sounds like the overflow program of a literary club We are learning again that the meeting of minds and moods is one of the sweetest and most amiable fruits of human society It has its own novelties and excitements no less than the automobile radio and bridge

Not but that these last have their own special value as the pure gold of leisure Even the mania for speed has about it something of the quality of poetry No one who on some moon light night has sped along a country road will deny the sheer poetical appeal there is in the ease and freedom of speed But the automobile has made the more peaceful kind of leisure possible as it never was before It has brought the city dweller within easy reach of green and solitude It has made neighbors of involuntary hermits The rad o too for all its blare of tawdry music has put millions within the reach of formerly impossible musical beauty It has brought Beethoven to the farmer and to apartment dwellers who could never be lured to Carnegie Hall And bridge sniffed at by the cultured moralist, has its own justification. It is a diverting and harmless adventure of the mind and has for its devotees its own glories of wonder and conflict and surprise If all these things are less interesting ultimately than conversation it is because we are social minds rather than aleatory machines

There is paradoxically enough an incredible romanticism in our efficient impatience with leisure We chase as madly as any early nineteenth-century German poet the Blue Flower of Happiness always beyond the hill. It is for that reason that we cannot take our idleness for the happiness it is we try to

turn it into an instrument toward the happiness it may bring It may bring all knowledge into our province or all salaries into our reach It is for that reason that we have turned to outlines of knowledge and courses in success But here too a change in spirit is notable

There are men one knows who have made the surprised and delighted discovery that it is possible if not to become hastily omniscient at least to become patiently at home in some small field of knowledge or some tiny techn c or art It is not easy or particularly joyous to go into the whole vague history of mankind but it is possible with pleasure to know one period or one decade of American history or the story of one man or one movement Only an octogenarian genius can master the whole of comparative literature but any one can carve out a little pathway of poetry or prose make one author one genre one theme his own be it Trollope or sonnets whaling or bal lades It is not possible for every man to be an artist but almost any one can learn to draw or model to play an instrument or plant a garden In England one meets omniscient people no more than in America nor are artists in every lane But there are thousands of unpretentious lawyers or business men who have made some intimate little field of knowledge or thought their own or learned to do one modest small hobby well

We may talk much about the future of America and think to measure its destiny by statistics of its educational economic or political changes But the outlook for our country lies in the quality of its idleness almost as much as anything else

Shall we then always alternate between trivial escapes into foolishness and solemn plunges into exploitation of our moments of repose? For us as for Aristotle there must be a golden mean We may learn still to be at peace long enough to think and dream after our own fashion We may learn to be together and be gay without being rowdy We may learn to be expert in some little territory of art or thought or science without losing the amateur touch We may still find time to live rather than time to kill

If we do we shall have learned what the spiritual life really means For it means nothing more than those moments in experience when we have some free glint of life for its own sake some lovely unforced glimmer of laughter or reason or love

BERNARD DE VOTO

BERN RD AUGUSTINE DE VOTO was born in Ogden, Utah in 1897 to a father of Italian descent and a mother of Mormon and pioneer background Army service during the first world war as a l eutenant d illing recruits in marksmansh p was followed by a bachelor s degree at Harvard in 1920 Honor ary degrees have been conferred on him by Middl bury and Kenyon Colleges the Uni ersity of Colorado and North we t rn He h s been a member of the faculty of North we tern and Harvard Un versities Many of his stories, his toric l articles essays and rev ews have been published in many magazines He was for two or three ye rs editor of the *Harva d G duates' Maga ine* and for another two or three y ars editor of *The S tu day R vi w of L teratu e* and he is now a member of the editorial board of the *New E gl d Quarterly* Since 1935 he has occupied "The Easy Chai of *H pe s Mag z ne* He was general editor of the seri s of books issued as Americana Deserta His own vol umes which total nearly a score of t tles are a varied array Novels publ hed in the decade 1924-1934 include *The C ooked M l The Ch riot of Fire* and *W Accept w th Pie e* B ographies include *Ma k Twa n s Am rica* (1932) and *Ma k Twa n s Wo k* (1942) A more general study of Ame can l terary history and criticism *The L terary Fallacy* (1944) was preceded by a histor cal study *The Yea of De in n 1846* (1943) In 195 he published *Th Cour e of Emp e* Among the ranks of c tics and literary historians he has been a vigorous controvers list and a storm center Two olumes of es ays have been included in his output *Fo ys a d Rebutt ls* (1936) and *M nority Report* (1940) As John August he h s published thrillers, spy stor es and murde mysteries The accompanying selection is taken from *M no ty R po t*

Seed Corn and Mistletoe

No ONE can approach through winter darkness a house from whose windows light ines out on the snow without feeling quieted and heartened Psychic subtleties may be active in such a response but there is no need to invoke th m for the obvious facts provide all the explanation we require A house means warmth and shelter light means human society Snow

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NO ONE can approach through winter darkness a house from whose windows light shines out on the snow without feeling quieted and heartened. Psychic subtleties may be active in such a response, but there is no need to invoke them for the obvious facts provide all the explanation we require. A house means warmth and shelter, light means human society. Snow

and the dark have simplified the detail of the picture and deadened sound—they suggest tranquillity which may mean much at the end of the day and food or drink for restoration, and the talk of friends or family The human mind is addicted to symbolism and here is an image of ease comfort, and reassurance that speaks directly to us in early childhood and from then on It is likely that very few people seeing a light on snow and quickening to the thought of warmth within pause to inquire whether the warmth comes from a gas furnace controlled by a thermostat or from the hickory logs burning on a spacious hearth to which a poetic sense would more properly attribute it. The light shining on the snow is quite as beautiful and quite as heartening when power to furnish it has been carried along a hundred miles of copper wire and stepped down through a transformer as when it comes from a candle dipped by hand

Somewhere here is a text for a sermon and sermons are appropriate to Christmas time though with the clergy currently talking about a planned economy which will plow them under altogether they may have to be preached by laymen And everything about Christmas fares badly among the cerebral who deplore its clearly reactionary nature mutter about its vulgarization by trade and commerce protest against its evil effects on children and complain that it isn t what it used to be anyway and never can be again Let us deal with these indignations first for though the cerebral are always running a slight temperature on logical grounds if the winter festival does indeed constitute a menace to society even a lay pulpit should take notice of it

About the children There are no statistical tables to tell us how many of them are still being deceived with an old and probably capitalistic myth called Santa Claus Probably millions of them for the mass of mankind has a gratifying disregard of theory and parents continue in spite of the heroic labors of educational psychologists to deceive their children because they themselves were deceived a generation ago remember liking it and observe that their children like it too The myth offends both a moral theory which holds that it is wrong to lie to children about anything and a highly scientific one which holds that you must not confuse a child s sense of reality by adding to his difficulty in dealing with real things the further difficulty of dealing with the altogether fictitious Yet everyone knows that a child s sense of reality

. . . incommensurable with an adult's and that children will make up phantasies of their own to supply the lack of any that may not be given them by others The people who object to lying to children about Santa Claus must perforce lie to them about all the daily phenomena of existence if indeed it is possible to say what a lie to a child is And the very people who object to Santa Claus as a myth are prone to instruct them in such conceptions as human brotherhood justice and the classless society

Both objections are on the level of the nostalgia which feels that the festival was all right for children when they themselves strung popcorn and cranberries to make decorations for the tree instead of the machine made tinsel of to-day (but if that was Group Participation was it not also Child Labor?) and that colored electric lights are tawdry whereas little candles once had a simple purity—it apparently being all right to burn the house up on Christmas Day so long as you keep the festival simple and pure This is on the same level with that other sentiment of the thoughtful which sets out to make wars impossible along with racketeering and unfair competition by keeping toy guns cannon and lead soldiers out of the hands of children Beat the toy sword into a toy steam shovel the notion goes and you will turn the child forever to the ways of peace at whatever cost of overproduction in the heavy industries But if you do not permit the normal war like phantasies of the child a normal expression at the right time you head straight for trouble Either you will render him unfit for normal aggression later on thus making him an easy prey for the combative or you will insure such phantasies getting an abnormal and delayed expression, thus making war inevitable

The unregarding behavior of untheoretical people is certainly sounder They act on an assumption that the important thing is to make children happy If you can give a child an experience of authentic awe and wonder and anticipation by telling him that a mythical fat man with a kind heart brings presents to children why the thing that counts is giving him the experience If children like to play with toy guns who is harmed? And if a child catches his breath in ecstasy because here in the living room stands an evergreen that has blossomed with colored lights why that is everything in itself You have given the child an experience of ecstasy which needs neither justification nor analysis on logical principles

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less a good deal less than ideal but the principal one the one without which none of the others could possibly operate is the human warmth of friends and relatives seeking expression and finding it Christmas may be commercialized till it has become indispensable to the business system and vulgarized till a sensitive theory shudders when dealing with it, but people go on making gifts to those who are dear to them The custom has the natural force of a stream flowing and takes its curve as a stream does from its own nature It is the popular fulfillment of human need and desire The people behave that way and you can do nothing whatever about them

That is the firstly of a lay sermon The secondly goes on to point out how though in the American Christmas are recognizable many elements taken from many places the whole is something altogether in its own terms Our Christmas Eve is English and our Christmas morning looks very German The carols sung in our churches and streets (and to advertise soap or engine oil in our broadcasting studios a native touch probably loathsome to the sensitive) come from all over Europe but are French to a functional anthropologist and medieval French at that A good many of the conventional symbols are Asiatic and the firecrackers which children set off in San Francisco and New Orleans exorcise demons and propitiate gods that are clearly Chinese The mistletoe is Norse and a vigilant suspicion observing the holly and the egg nog can detect compulsions bubbling in the blood of pagans far older than the rise of that star in the East which they are used to commemorate Yes a hodgepodge of rituals and symbols and of beliefs gathered at random but it has taken a shape of its own which no one who has experienced it can ever possibly confuse with any other Christmas One who has known the American Christmas as a child a lover or a parent knows a festival which has shaped his thought and patterns of emotion lying far deeper than thought in a way uniquely its own In whatever corner of the earth he may find himself on Christmas Eve the rhythms pulsing in his nerves and the images translating them will have reference to the common and unique experience of Americans That remembered remembering child seeing the filled stocking and the lighted tree hearing a Catholic carol so illogically sung in a Congregational meeting house hurrying to deliver a holly wreath to a friend of his parents in order to try his skates the sooner on the ice of country pond or city sidewalks—is set off from all o
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One is constrained to be equally skeptical of the indignation that sees Christmas as a conspiracy against the public peace and interest by people who have Christmas presents to sell Like so many other causes of the cerebral this presents itself as a benevolent championship of the exploited whereas it is really a contempt of the common man It is the old old cry of Utopians the people are fools The people that is are weak gullible infatuated unstable venal too foolish to fol low after righteousness—give us machine guns and we will make them virtuous A cerebral dictatorship ever so kindly but quite firm would safeguard them from exploitation by the hucksters defend them from the seductions of advertising deliver them from the pumped up hysteria of crowds How pitiful that they should give one another presents because the department store tells them to how intolerable that the System should make money from a sentiment that the people only think they feel! See how mechanically the common man jerks about on his wire and how slavishly he does what he is told to do by conspirators in the service of commerce Therefore let us save him from himself teach him that his emotions are not his own and deliver him into self knowledge and emancipation—at the point of a bayonet A lay pulpit must denounce all this fervor as propaganda—fascist or com munist whichever epithet will most affront the kindly theorist. It is an ancient despair uttering an ancient cry the lust of the fretted to save the people by force The people should ignore it altogether

As of course they do They go on giving one another presents at Christmas time no matter how the profits of the hucksters may pile up They spend as much as they can afford to and usually a good deal more If trade prospers and the banks can express Christmas in the form of graphs the public is not appalled Nor is its feeling degraded The cathedrals of the age of faith which the theories treat with the greatest respect were fenced round by the booths of traders and an earlier Christianity managed to combine a good deal of com merce with its devotion—and the roads to the American camp-m eting were thronged with peddlers whom the devout patron ized without in the least diminishing their pious exercises Not the trading booths but the devotion was the important thing about the cathedrals and the important thing about Christmas is not that the people are sold presents but that they give them to one another The most diverse and even the most irrelevant motives may enter in many of them doubt-

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American tradition different from all other traditions has created its own symbols

There are a good many like them and a lay preacher would call them into remembrance at Christmas a time dedicated from its origin to remembering the justifications of hopefulness and disregarding the foundations of despair Autumn comes and the President of the United States summons the nation to render formal thanks for its harvest and lesser magistrates repeat his proclamation Meanwhile at half the farm doorways in New England pumpkins stand on the stoop a splash of color against the dulling landscape though no one can explain the custom In rural places across the continent boys nail on the barn door the tails of woodchucks and chipmunks and red squirrels they have shot beside them and on the walls of garages in the towns their fathers add last year s automobile-license plates to the column of those that have gone before Seed corn hangs in bunches on the wall that gets the sun and the corn is shocked The corn is shocked to dry and so is the wheat and the form and structure of the shocking are peculiar to the United States We shock our corn differently and the image also calls up associations unique to Americans for it is part of an intricate organization of skills and customs and emotions of social beliefs and relationships of a way of living with and in society that is our own way and no one else s A live symbol to Americans and one whose meaning is beyond the instinct and out of the comprehension of all other people

A symbol of an American way of life Let it be remembered at Christmas time and with it a great company of its kind, since Christmas is a time for symbols Light shining on snow through winter dark is as universal as the star going before the Wise Men on their way but also to all who have lived in America it has a special reference being as well the light from a cabin in the clearing with the forest beyond them stretching toward the unknown West Few Americans now have ever lived in a cabin or ever seen a clearing in the forest, yet the words mean something to them that they mean to no one else on earth Fewer still have ever ridden in a stagecoach climbing toward Cumberland Gap or plodded beside a canvas covered wagon toward the land where the streams sink out of sight with Indians possibly crouching behind the next rise It is a long time since a mythical Indian princess interceded for a probably lying Captain John Smith none of us has driven the *Sovereign of the Seas* round the Horn to beat the

clipper fleet none of us has ridden down the Natchez Trace or forced to plow for the first time through matted grass roots to prairie soil Andrew J ckson and Abe Lincoln and Buffalo Bill and Daniel Boone are dead Huck Finn is only someone in a book and Paul Bunyan is not even that but only talk sleepy at best and now no longer uttered But though none of us ever saw the Wise Men coming from the East we still make gifts to our friends and children on Christmas Day And the cabin in the clearing the clipper fleet the departed heroes and the corn standing in shocks are systolic in us part of the rhythm of our breath and of our d sire—and part too of our fate They stand for our own way of life they are our living tradition and we understand them being shaped by them and being inescapably obedient to them and no one else understands them That is the way our corn is shocked

That may as well be remembered at Christmas time at Christmas time especially in a period of tribulation The cerebral—people characterized primarily by fear and by contempt of the unconsidered multitudes and by a lust for absolutes and for absolute power—tell us that America must choose between two ways of life both European both essentially the same both intolerable Let there be read to them the prayer appointed to be read in churches on Christmas Day they are fools and liars and the truth is not in them That is not our choice but an alien one and our choice is foreordained for us by our own tradition our native way of life formed by our own systole and diastole Our corn is maize and Europe had no maize

E B WHITE

E B White was born in Mt. Vernon, N Y., in 1899 His college education at Cornell was interrupted by army serv ice but he returned to the university and received a degree in 1921 After graduation he became a reporter on the *Seattle Times* then worked his way to Alaska as mess boy on a ship Returned to New York, he became production assistant in an advertising agency Here he began sending to *The New Yorker* the contributions that led to his joining the maga zine s staff For many years he wrote most of the opening "Talk of the Town columns In 1929 he married Katharine Sargeant Angell literary editor of *The New Yorker* From 1938 to 1943 he wrote a monthly department for *Harper's Maga ine* He now divides his time between New York and his farm in Maine He has received honorary doctoral degrees in letters from Dartmouth Maine Yale Bowdoin Ham ilton Harvard and Colby His volumes of verse includ *The Lady Is Cold* (1929) and *The Fox of Peapack* (1938) With James Thurber he wrote *Is Sex Necessary?* (1929) *Every Day Is Saturday* (1934) *Quo V dimus? or The Case for the Bicycle* (1939) *The W ld Flag* (1946) and *The Second Tree from the Corn r* (1953) are collections of his stories essays satirical sketches and wry editorial comments *Here Is New York* (1949) is a sensitive and perceptive record of what the metropolis has meant to him With his wife he edited *A Subtreasury of Ameri an Humor* (1941) He has also written books for children *Stuart Little* (1945) and *Charlotte s Web* (1952) *One Man s Meat* (1942) a collection of thoughtful and witty essays which first appeared in *Harper's Maga ine* received a Limited Edition Club Gold Medal as the book most likely to attain the stature of a classic The following selection is taken from th book The p ece was first published in July 1940

Freedom

I HAVE often noticed on my trips up to the city that people have recut their clothes to follow the fashion On my last trip however it seemed to me that people had remodeled their ideas too—taken in their convictions a little at the waist shortened the sleeves of their resolve and fitted themselves out in a new intellectual ensemble copied from a smart desien

out of the very latest page of history It seemed to me they had strung along with Paris a little too long.

I confess to a disturbed stomach I feel sick when I find anyone adjusting his mind to the new tyranny which is succeeding abroad Because of its fundamental strictures fascism does not seem to me to admit of any compromise or any rationalization, and I resent the patronizing air of persons who find in my plain belief in freedom a sign of immaturity If it is boyish to believe that a human being should live free then I'll gladly arrest my development and let the rest of the world grow up

I shall report some of the strange remarks I heard in New York One man told me that he thought perhaps the Nazi ideal was a sounder ideal than our constitutional system because have you ever noticed what fine alert young faces the young German soldiers have in the newsreel? He added Our American youngsters spend all their time at the movies —they re a mess That was his summation of the case his interpretation of the new Europe Such a remark leaves me pale and shaken. If it represents the peak of our intelligence then the steady march of despotism will not receive any considerable setback at our shores

Another man informed me that our democratic notion of popular government was decadent and not worth bothering about— because England is really rotten and the industrial towns there are a disgrace That was the only reason he gave for the hopelessness of democracy and he seemed mightily pleased with himself as though he were more familiar than most with the anatomy of decadence and had detected subtler aspects of the situation than were discernible to the rest of us

Another man assured me that anyone who took any kind of government seriously was a gullible fool You could be sure he said that there is nothing but corruption because of the way Clemenceau acted at Versailles He said it didn t make any difference really about this war It was just another war Having relieved himself of this majestic bit of reasoning he subsided

Another individual discovering signs of zeal creeping into my blood berated me for having lost my detachment my pure skeptical point of view He announced that he wasn t going to be swept away by all this nonsense but would prefer to remain in the role of innocent bystander which he said was the duty of any intelligent person. (I noticed, that he

phoned later to qualify his remark as though he had lost some of his innocence in the cab on the way home)

Those are just a few samples of the sort of talk that seemed to be going round—talk which was full of defeatism and disillusion and sometimes of a too studied innocence Men are not merely annihilating themselves at a great rate these days, but they are telling one another enormous lies grandiose fibs Such remarks as I heard are fearfully disturbing in their cumulative effect They are more destructive than dive bombers and mine fields for they challenge not merely one's immediate position but one's main defenses They seemed to me to issue either from persons who could never have really come to grips with freedom so as to understand her or from renegades Where I expected to find indignation I found paralysis or a sort of dim acquiescence as in a child who is duly swallowing a distasteful pill I was advised of the growing anti Jewish sentiment by a man who seemed to be watching the phenomenon of intolerance not through tears of shame but with a clear intellectual gaze as through a well ground lens

The least a man can do at such a time is to declare himself and tell where he stands I believe in freedom with the same burning delight the same faith the same intense abandon which attended its birth on this continent more than a century and a half ago I am writing my declaration rapidly much as though I were shaving to catch a train Events abroad give a man a feeling of being pressed for time Actually I do not believe I am pressed for time and I apologize to the reader for a false impression that may be created I just want to tell before I get slowed down that I am in love with freedom and that it is an affair of long standing and that it is a fine state to be in and that I am deeply suspicious of people who are beginning to adjust to fascism and dictators merely because they are succeeding in war From such adaptable natures a smell rises I pinch my nose

For as long as I can remember I have had a sense of living somewhat freely in a natural world I don't mean I enjoyed freedom of action but my existence seemed to have the quality of free ness I traveled with secret papers pertaining to a divine conspiracy Intuitively I've always been aware of the vitally important pact which a man has with himself to be all things to himself and to be identified with all things to stand self reliant, taking advantage of his haphazard connection with a planet, riding his luck and following his bent with the tenacity of a hound My first and greatest love affair

was with this thing we call freedom this lady of infinite allure this dangerous and beautiful and sublime being who restores and supplies us all

It began with the haunting intimation (which I presume every child receives) of his mystical inner life of God in man of nature publishing herself through the I This elusive sensation is moving and memorable It comes early in life a boy we'll say sitting on the front steps on a summer night, thinking of nothing in particular suddenly hearing as with a new perception and as though for the first time the pulsing sound of crickets overwhelmed with the novel sense of identification with the natural company of insects and grass and night, conscious of a faint answering cry to the universal perplexing question What is I'? Or a little girl returning from the grave of a pet bird leaning with her elbows on the window sill inhaling the unfamiliar draught of death suddenly seeing herself as part of the complete story Or to an older youth encountering for the first time a great teacher who by some chance word or mood awakens something and the youth beginning to breathe as an individual and conscious of strength in his vitals I think the sensation must develop in many men as a feeling of identity with God—an eruption of the spirit caused by allergies and the sense of divine existence as distinct from mere animal existence This is the beginning of the affair with freedom

But a man s free condition is of two parts the instinctive freeness he experiences as an animal dweller on a planet, and the practical liberties he enjoys as a privileged member of human society The latter is of the two more generally understood more widely admired more violently challenged and discussed It is the practical and apparent side of freedom The United States almost alone today offers the liberties and the privileges and the tools of freedom. In this land the citizens are still invited to write plays and books to paint their pictures to meet for discussion, to dissent as well as to agree to mount soapboxes in the public square to enjoy education in all subjects without censorship to hold court and judge one another to compose music to talk politics with their neighbors without wondering whether the secret police are listening to exchange ideas as well as goods to kid the government when it needs kidding and to read real news of real events instead of phony news manufactured by a paid agent of the state This is a fact and should give every person pause

To be free in a planetary sense is to feel that you belong

to earth To be free in a social sense is to feel at home in a democratic framework In Adolph Hitler although he is a freely flowering individual we do not detect either type of sensibility From reading his book I gather that his feeling for earth is not a sense of communion but a driving urge to prevail His feeling for men is not that they co-exist, but that they are capable of being arranged and standardized by a superior intellect—that their existence suggests not a fulfillment of their personalities but a submersion of their personalities in the common racial destiny His very great absorption in the destiny of the German people somehow loses some of its effect when you discover from his writings in what vast contempt he holds *all* people I learned he wrote " to gain an insight into the unbelievably primitive opinions and arguments of the people To him the ordinary man is a primitive capable only of being used and led He speaks continually of people as sheep halfwits and impudent fools—the same people from whom he asks the utmost in loyalty and to whom he promises the ultimate in prizes

Here in America where our society is based on belief in the individual not contempt for him the free principle of life has a chance of surviving I believe that it must and will survive To understand freedom is an accomplishment which all men may acquire who set their minds in that direction and to love freedom is a tendency which many Americans are born with To live in the same room with freedom or in the same hemisphere is still a profoundly shaking experience for me

One of the earliest truths (and to him most valuable) that the author of *Mein Kampf* discovered was that it is not the written word but the spoken word which in heated moments moves great masses of people to noble or ignoble action The written word unlike the spoken word is something which every person examines privately and judges calmly by his own intellectual standards not by what the man standing next to him thinks I know wrote Hitler that one is able to win people far more by the spoken than by the written word Later he adds contemptuously For let it be said to all knights of the pen and to all the political dandies especially of today the greatest changes in this world have never yet been brought about by a goose quill' No the pen has always been reserved to motivate these changes theoretically

Luckily I am not out to change the world—that s being

done for me and at a great clip But I know that the free spirit of man is persistent in nature it recurs and has never successfully been wiped out by fire or flood I set down the above remarks merely (in the words of Mr Hitler) to motivate that spirit theoretically Being myself a knight of the goose quill I am under no misapprehension about "winning people but I am inordinately proud these days of the quill for it has shown itself historically to be the hypodermic which inoculates men and keeps the germ of freedom always in circulation so that there are individuals in every time in every land who are the carriers the Typhoid Marys capable of infecting others by mere contact and example These persons are feared by every tyrant—who shows his fear by burning the books and destroying the individuals A writer goes about his task today with the extra satisfaction which comes from knowing that he will be the first to have his head lopped off—even before the political dandies In my own case this is a double satisfaction for if freedom were denied me by force of earthly circumstance I am the same as dead and would infinitely prefer to go into fascism without my head than with it having no use for it any more and not wishing to be saddled with so heavy an encumbrance.

THEODORE PRATT

THEODORE PRATT was born in Minneapolis in 1901 He at tended Colgate and Columbia without taking a degree From the age of fifteen for eight years—including the time he was an undergraduate student—he was a newspaper correspondent or reporter He spent three years as a reader of plays for the New York theatrical producer Winthrop Ames This post was followed by a four year stint as European correspondent for the *New York Sun* He became a free lance writer in 1933 He now lives in Florida and several of his dozen or more novels are vivid reflections of the Florida scene *Big Blow* (1936)—also dramatized and produced on Broadway *Mercy Island* (1941)—also produced as a moving picture *The Barefoot Mailman* (1943) *The Flame Tree* (1950) a story of Palm Beach in its early days and *The Big Bubble* (1951) an account of the real estate boom of the 1920s are among these Florida novels Under the pseudonym of Timothy Brace he has published murder mysteries Short stories plays original motion pictures and articles are among his other writings The accompanying selection is taken from a book which recounts entertaining episodes of life on the continent and at home in New York Florida and California, *Perils in Provence and Other Ticklish Places* (1944)

French and English Spoken

IN COLLEGE I flunked French I three times This was not my fault My professor admired France so passionately that he began each class by having the students sing *La Marseillaise* Chanting a stirring foreign national anthem daily at eight o clock in the morning confounded me so completely that I could never get a passing grade at the end of a semester

Later in life I met my professor in Nice and when we had a drink together at a cafe I indulged in the low gesture of impressing him with my knowledge of colloquial French asking the waiter *Qu est-ce c est la taille?* or What s the size?" in place of the more formal call for *l addition* or the check The professor had enough sense of humor to take out a pencil and mark on the marble table top a belated and ironical A plus

This proud point was achieved only after some years resi

dence in France and many a horrible blunder involving the proper selection of words and their correct pronunciation. This if not executed in exactly the right way runs into the literal French spirit with devastating effect.

The first of my ghastly mistakes when learning the language at its source occurred during a fatal luncheon in a restaurant on the boulevard. I was to meet my wife at this place and we were to have lunch together She was late and I was hungry so I went ahead with the meal My French held up admirably through the first few courses Then it failed me miserably While the waiter hovered over me to take the order for my following course I ran my eye down the menu caught the listing *croquette* and informed the waiter that that was what I would have next. At least that is what I thought I told the waiter

The dish was not long in being served and arrived at a propitious moment. Just as my wife entered the place and saw me an enthusiastic young *cocotte* seated herself beside me at the table

This incident is still good for an open forum among the family

Another large brick I dropped into this part of the French spirit had to do with the purchase of a *bidon* or can to carry an extra supply of gasoline in Belle I entered the hardware store at the Beauprés and though the word was new to me I rather prided myself on my pronunciation of *bidon* when I got it off to Madame Beaupré She nodded vigorously and I thought, even approvingly But my astonishment and chagrin were acute when she led me over to a dazzling display of *bidets* those intimate articles of French plumbing which most Americans know are not primarily footbaths

It is well known that sentiment can often lead to sad ends and this actuated the most effective of my mistakes achieved during the days when I was able to throw out, explosively only a word here and there in my linguistic agony While staying overnight with my wife in a provincial French hotel I suddenly and luckily remembered that it was our wedding anniversary To fulfill the obligations of the day I purchased a bouquet of flowers for my wife and before presenting it to her I tried to obtain a vase to put it in.

I called the *valet de chambre* who agreed when shown the flowers that they were very pretty but wasn t at all bright about going on from there about the matter I then tried

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Gambelle s grocery store and he wished to swear he said Son of beech! or even worse When I asked the lady presiding over the tobacco counter if I had put enough stamps on my letters she replied All right. Even the children on the street aped their elders One day we heard two black smocked young things calling to each other Goodebye! Monsieur le Comte began to greet me with an enthusiastic " ello!

It became no longer necessary either if we insisted on speaking French ourselves to the French to pronounce proper names correctly or with the right inflection to get any results Once upon a time when motoring in Belle we asked the way by saying *Quel st le chemin pour allez a Grasse?* and pronounced that city s name like grass we were met with a blank stare Then when we d asked the same person six times and the stare was no less blank, but increasingly hostile we said something about the city of perfumes there was a highly illuminating grimace and pointing out of our dreadful pronunciation to the effect of Ah h! Grahss!

Those dear dead days disappeared. We began just to go ahead with the question as usual or better asked How in hell do you get to Grass? and almost any native pointed a knobby finger and said "T'at way

This sort of thing went hand in glove with what the French believed to be understanding of *étrang rs* and their habits A good example was the little French physician who was linguist cally exhibitionistic enough to insist upon speaking English with me By doing this he seemed to indicate that he knew all about me and my ways 'Your woman he told me valiantly is altogether well He referred to my wife whom he had been treating for a mild complaint Of herself your woman is now independency he continued "So it happens you have some comment to make?

I told him that his ministrations had been efficient and good and that I was pleased with them. That however did not seem to be the comment he expected me to make His shoulders went up around his ears somewhere he looked at me and w ted expectantly

Oh I said how much is your fee?"

Hi shoulders descended from his ears as he repl ed with the satisfaction of knowing that I was an American My charges is—are?—one thousand francs

When I expressed my shock at th s exorbitant amount, he asked Is this too dear for your woman Monsieur?

my French to get the idea over *De l'eau!* I said *De l'eau!"* The *valet de chambre* nodded and wanted to know if it was Vichy mineral water I wanted to drink I groaned and managed to remember that the word for vase was the same in French as it was in English and called it out But my pronunciation wasn t what it should have been and the *valet* only stood doubtfully

Thinking he was reluctant about wanting to furnish the desired object I tried to make it plain that its use would only be required for the night *Le nuit!"* I shouted *Pour la nuit!"* Some kind of light dawned in the dim brain of the *valet* and he uttered a comprehending "Ah h! as only the French can express that exclamation But he seemed surprised and a puzzled look came into his face I insisted The *valet* started to object and I kept saying *Oui! Mais oui!* emphatically Finally though he shook his head the *valet* agreed and took the flowers to put them in a vase

The shrieks of my wife aroused a good portion of the hotel s guests when a little later the *valet de chambre* returned with the flowers daintily arranged in a *vase de nuit* otherwise and blushingly known as a chamberpot

The occasion for such contretemps was in time removed not by my proficiency in the language but by quite another thing When we first went to France to live it was necessary to speak French We even took lessons from a skeptical lady named Madame Garnier Rosset or at least we had French conversations with her during the infrequent moments she did not prefer to speak English All those efforts were ultimately wasted It became so that knowing the language was no longer a requirement In fact the best thing to do was to throw away your *French in Sixteen Annoying Minutes a Day* and forget all about it

For the French were hot after English What s more they were proud of achievement and showed it on every possible occasion It wasn t a question of adopting a few English words for their conversation— steack on menus being one of the first home following quickly after and then such things as businessman and "knok-out —we found it pretty difficult to locate anyone with whom to speak the fast-dying language of the diplomats

Addressing Monsieur Clément de la Flore in French he replied in English ghastly to be sure but English When I used my best slang on the waiter at a cafe he now said "Tree francs Meestair When something went wrong in Monsieur

student praises a friend s flower garden he may expect in reply Do not panegyrise its beauty so much and he should then say 'Why now! A little flower interests me more than a great star And the smallest garden rose more than the whole firmament. Will you allow me to make a nosegay?"

If the student isn t feeling very well he is instructed to say I am somewhat ailing If he meets someone he has known before he must say I know you again well " And if the student wishes to register sales resistance the *manuel* would have him bring forth "These are oratorical preludes sir very threatening to my purse

I still look upon the Messieurs Boussus and Jaurrand as among the chief instigators forcing Franco-American amity at that time to remain solely a matter between the diplomats Certainly if anything is to be deduced from the confusion they generated in one of their students the two gentlemen thrust apart instead of bringing together Armand the village dandy who had cheated his old father out of house and fortune and had never done a stroke of work in his life took to greeting us of an evening as he passed by on the road Lifting his hat he would always reply to our *Bon soi* by saying gravely and pridefully Good morning

Comment allez vous Monsieur?

O K Bud

he was approaching 70 be rode round his property for four or five hours several days each week It was not easy for him but it was not difficult either He never thought whether a thing was easy or d fficult If it ought to be done it would be done Besides he had always been strong Although his hair was white and his eyes were dimming he stood a good six feet and weighed 210 pounds He rose at four every morning It was December now Christmas was approaching snow was in the air frost and snow on the ground This month he had been away from home on a toilsome but necessary trip and in the hard weather he had been able to ride over his farms very sel dom Still he liked to see them whenever he could The land was quiet yet a deal of work remained to be done

There was much on the old gentleman s mind His son had come home from college in some kind of disturbance and uneasiness unwilling to go back again Perhaps he should be sent elsewhere—to Harvard or William and M ry? Perhaps he should have a private tutor? Meanwhile in order to teach him habits of quiet and undistracted industry (the old gentleman wrote to a friend) and I believe I do keep him in his room a certain portion of the twenty four hours But even so nothing would sLbstitute for the boy s own will power which was apparently defective The grandchildren too were sometimes sick because they were spoiled Not by their grandmother but by their mother The old gentleman s wife never spoiled ai yone indeed she wrote to Fanny to warn her saying emphatically I am sure there is nothing so pernicious as over charging the stomach of a child

He thought hard and long about the state of the nation Although he had retired from politics he was often consulted and he kept closely in touch One advantage of retirement was that it gave him time to think over gene al principles Never an optimist he could usually see important dangers some time before they appeared to others This December as he rode over the stiff clods under the pale sky he was think ing over two constant threats to his country One was the danger of disputes between the separate States and the central government (Congress had just passed a law designed to combat sedition and two of the States had immediately de nounced it as unconstitutional This could lead only to dis aster) The other problem was that respectable men were not entering public life They seemed to prefer to pursue riches to seek their private happiness as though such a thing were possible if the nation itself declined. The old gentleman

GILBERT HIGHET

GILBERT ARTHUR HIGHET was born in Glasgow in 1906 He received a master s degree from Glasgow University in 1929 (and a Doctor of Letters degree in 1951) He was Craven Scholar and Chancellor's Prizeman at Oxford from 1929 to 1932, receiving a second master s degree He has also re ceived the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters from Case Institute of Technology Immediately after grad uation from Oxford he married Helen Clark MacInnes au thor during the past dozen years of several popular novels From 1932 until 1938 he was fellow and tutor in classics at St John s College Oxford The Highets came to the United States in 1937 when on leave of absence from Oxford he started his career at Columbia University as visiting associate in Classics During the war years he was a member of a British mission in the United States and Canada and later in the British army For a post war year he was lieutenant colonel in military government in Germany In 1950 he re turned to the United States and to Columbia University where he became a professor of Latin In 1951 he became a naturalized citizen of the United States In 1949 he published *The Classical T adition* an erudite and readable account of the ways in which Greek and Latin influence has affected the art and literature of western Europe and America in 1950 *The Art of Teach ng*—genial and practical statements and illustrations of the essential qualities of a good teacher in 1953 *People Places and Books* and two books in 1954—*Man s Unconque able M nd* and *Th Migrat on of Ideas* In 1952, he became chief book critic for *Ha per's Maga ine* but relinquished this post in the summer of 1954 to become a judge for the Book of the Month Club His weekly book re views broadcast by radio have delighted a wide audience The following selection a mid twentieth-century and a Scot tish born author s reflections on a historic American is taken from *People Places and Books*

The Old Gentleman

THE OLD GENTLEMAN was riding round his land He had re tired several years ago after a busy career but farming was what he liked and he knew that the best way to keep farms prosperous was to supervise them in person So although

great assemblies some in happiness and some in anguish of soul none in despair

One of the worst was Christmas Day of twenty-one years before. That was early in the war a bad time It snowed four inches on Christmas His men were out in the open with no proper quarters Although he started them on building shelters an aggressive move by the enemy made them stand to arms and interrupt all other work for nearly a week And they had no decent uniforms no warm coats no strong shoes no regular supplies two days without meat three days without bread almost a quarter of his entire force unfit for duty He was receiving no supplies from the government and he was actually meeting opposition from the locals They had sent up a protest against keeping the troops in service during the winter Apparently they thought you could raise an army whenever you needed one—not understanding that this little force was the only permanent barrier between them and foreign domination He had repl ed with crushing energy to that protest. In a letter to the President of Congress he wrote

> I can assure these gentlemen that it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fire side than to occupy a cold bleak hill and sleep under frost and snow without clothes or blankets However although they seem to ha e little feeling for the naked and distressed soldiers, I feel superabundantly for them and from my soul I pity those miseries which it is neither in my power to relieve or prevent.

He ended with his well known strongly and graceful written signature G *WASHINGTON*

The year before that, 1776 things had been nearly as bad —the s me difficulty about uniforms and supplies Late in December he wrote earnestly from his camp For godsake hurry with the clothing as nothing will contribute more to fac litate the recruiting serv ce than warm & comfortable cloth ng to those who engage The Commissary informs me that he cannot prevail on the m llers to grind & that the troops in consequence are like to suffer for want of flour This must be remed ed by fair or other means. However his chief concern then was not suppl es nor discipline nor

decided to write to Mr Henry whom he considered a sound man and urge him to re-enter politics he would surely be elected if he would consent to stand and then with his experience he could do much to bridge the gap between the federal government and the States

The old gentleman stopped his horse With that large cool comprehensive gaze which every visitor always remembered he looked round the land It was doing better Five years ago his farms had been almost ruined by neglect and greed During his long absence the foreman had cropped them too hard and omitted to cultivate and fertilize looking for quick and easy profits Still even before returning he had set about restoring the ground to health and vigor first by feeding the soil as much as possible all year round second by a judicious succession of crops and third most important of all by careful regularity and constant application As he put it in a letter 'To establish good rules and a regular system is the life and soul of every kind of business Now the land was improving every year It was always a mistake to expect rapid returns To build up a nation and to make a farm out of the wilderness both needed long steady thoughtful determined application both were the work of the will

Long ago when he was only a boy he had copied out a set of rules to help in forming his manners and his character—in the same careful way as he would lay out a new estate or survey a recently purchased tract of land The last of the rules he still remembered *Keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called Conscience* Some of the philosophers said that the spark from heaven was reason the power of the intellect which we share with God The old gentleman did not quarrel with them but he did not believe them He knew that the divine fire in the spirit was the sense of duty the lawfulness which orders the whole universe the power of which a young poet then alive was soon to write

Thou dost preserve the tars from wrong
And the most ancient heavens through Thee are fresh and strong

His mind turned back over his long and busy life He never dreamed or brooded but he liked to note things down to plan them and record them Now on this cold December day he could recall nearly every Christmas he had ever spent sixty at least Some were peaceful some were passed in deadly danger many in war some in strange lonely places some in

the United States of becoming a respectable nation I resign with satisfaction the appointment I accepted with diffidence a diffidence in my abilities to accomplish so arduous a task which however was superceded by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause the support of the supreme power of the Union, and the patronage of Heaven.

So he said And the President of Congress replied in terms which although still balanced and baroque are more emotional and almost tender

> We join you in commending the interests of our dearest country to the Almighty God beseeching him to dispose the hearts and minds of its citizens to improve the opportunity afforded them of becoming a happy and respectable nation And for you we address to him our earnest prayers that a life so beloved may be fostered with all his care that your days may be happy as they have been illustrious and that he will finally give you that reward which this world cannot give.

Next day Washington left for Mount Vernon and spent Christmas 1783 at home in peace

Some years passed December was always busy Washington was on horseback nearly every day riding round his place d recting the operations which kept the land alive and fed all those who lived on it, ditching threshing hog killing repair ing walls lifting potatoes husking corn And it was a poor December when he did not have at least half a dozen days hunting though in that thickly wooded country he often lost his fox and sometimes hounds too For Christmas after Christ mas in the eighties his diary shows him living the life of a peaceful squire and on the day itself usually entertaining friends and relatives On Christmas Eve 1788 Mr Mad son stayed with him and was sent on to Colchester next day in Wash ngton s carriage

Again a change Christmas 1789 saw him as the first Presi dent of the United States living in New York the capital of the Union, and receiving formal calls from diplomats and statesmen In the forenoon he attended St. Paul s Chapel in the afternoon Mrs Washington received visitors not nu merous but respectable and next day Washington rode out

defense but attack On Christmas Day long before dawn he was crossing the Delaware River at McKonkey s Ferry with a striking force of over two thousand men He spent Christmas morning marching to Trenton Next day he at tacked Colonel Rahl and his Hessians Half of them were sleeping off their Christmas liquor and nearly all were par alyzed with drowsiness and astonishment Hungry and hopeful the Americans burst in on them like wolves among fat cattle The surprise was complete The victory prepared on Christ mas Day was the first real success of the war

Two winters later at Christmas time Washington was in Philadelphia to discuss the plans for next year s campaign with a Congressional committee People were very civil they called him the Cincinnatus of America and some of them made an effort to take the war seriously But many did not He would rather have been in winter quarters with his men A few days before Christmas 1778 he wrote to Mr Harrison that as far as he could see most people were sunk in idleness dissipation and extravagance Speculation peculation and an insatiable thirst for riches seem to have got the better of every other consideration and almost of every order of men

Year after year he was in winter quarters at Christmas time usually in a simple farmhouse neither vast nor commodious in command of a starving and bankrupt army In 1781 after Yorktown things were a trifle better and he had dinner with his wife and family at Mr Morris s in Philadelphia amid general rejoicing But the following Christmas was the blackest ever He had thought of asking for leave to look after his long neglected private concerns but the army was very close to mutiny which would have meant the final loss of the war and the probable collapse of the entire nation It was not only the enlisted men now it was the officers they were preparing to make a formal protest to Congress with a list of their grievances and only the personal influen e of Washington himself only is earnest pleading and his absolute honesty and selflessness kept the little force in being through that winter

Yet by Christmas the next year in 1783 it was all over Washington said farewell to his officers and then on Decem ber 23rd he resigned his commission His formal utterance still stands grave as a monument

> Happy in the confirmation of our Independence and Sovereignty and pleased with the opportunity afforded

after a physical collapse which looked very like an attack of consumption involving hemorrhage fever and a certain hollowness of the chest which never quite left him He bore up as well as he could under the barrage of slander which his enemies poured in upon him, including the foulest of all, that he was accepting graft but he had been ill for months when he finally broke down (Years later when he was appointed Commander in-Chief he was offered a regular salary but refused to accept it. Instead he asked Congress to pay his expenses he kept the accounts scrupulously and he presented them without extras at the end of the war Slanders are always raised about great men but this one slander was never leveled at Washington again.)

He looked back beyond that to one of the hardest Christmases in his memory That was the Christmas of 1753 when he was only 21 Governor Dinwiddie had determined to stop the encirclement of Virginia. The French were building forts on the Ohio and arresting traders from the British colonies who penetrated that territory Soon there would be nothing westward except a ring of hostile Indians supported by arrogant French officers Isolated by land the colonies could later have been cut off by sea, too and the seed would have withered almost before it struck firm root

The governor commissioned young Major Washington to make his way to the French fort, to deliver a letter from him to the French commandant, and to bring back both a reply and an estimate of the situation. He did but he was very nearly killed Not by the French. Or not directly They merely told him that they were absolutely determined to take possession of the Ohio territory and returned a diplomatic but unsatisfactory reply to the governor's letter Still, Major Washington had at least the substance of a good intelligence report, for he had inspected the fort and his men had observed how many canoes the French were building. He had only to return. The French, however endeavored to persuade him to go up and interview the governor of French Canada and, that failing set about bribing the Indians in his party with liquor and guns either to leave him altogether or to delay until the worst of the winter when travel would be impossible for months But Washington had a good guide he was friendly with the Indian chief and he had a tireless will He set off on the return journey about the third week in December when snow was already falling heavily mixed with rain Six days were spent on a river full of ice The canoes began to give out. The

to take his exercise (He and Theodore Roosevelt were probably the finest horsemen of all our Presidents those who knew him best liked to think of him on horseback the most graceful rider in the country) But for years thereafter his exercise was cut short and his days were swallowed up in the constant crowding of business He rarely saw his land and seldom visited his home His Christmases were formal and public brilliant but not warm not holidays

But now after his final retirement he had time to look back on earlier Christmases Some of them were very strange Christmas of 1751 he had spent at sea His elder brother Lawrence frail and overworked sailed to Barbados for a winter cruise and George accompanied him On November 3rd they landed at Bridgetown and were invited to dine next day with Major Clarke O C British forces Washington observed gravely to his diary We went—myself with some reluctance as the smallpox was in his family Less than two weeks later Washington was down with smallpox which kept him in bed for nearly a month but he recovered with very few marks By December 25th he and his brother were sailing back past the Leeward Islands As he liked to do all through his life he noted the weather (fine clear and pleasant with moderate sea) and the situation latitude 18 30) and with a youthful exuberance which he soon lost he adds We dined on a fat Irish goose Beef & & and drank a health to our absent friends

Five years later he was a colonel engaged in one of the wars that helped to make this continent Anglo-Saxon instead of Latin the war to keep the French pressing downward along the Ohio from Canada and upward along the Mississippi from New Orleans from encircling the British colonies in an enclave along the coast and cutting them off forever from the wealth of the plains the rivers and the distant fabulous Pacific Those two Christmases Washington could recall as a time of profound depression filled with the things he hated most anarchic competition and anarchic indiscipline He commanded a Virginian regiment and Captain Dagworthy of the Maryland troops at Fort Cumberland would not supply him He despised drunkenness and slack soldiering and he would not tolerate the attempts by the liquor trade to batten on his troops and run local elections by handing out free liquor His enemies beat him temporarily not by bending his will but by wrecking his health Christmas 1757 saw him on leave

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horses foundered The rest of the party went more and more slowly Major Washington put himself in Indian walking dress and pushed on on foot On Christmas Day he was making his way toward the Great Beaver Creek Next day he left the entire party to follow with horses money and bag gage and set out alone with the guide Christopher Gist

Next day a lone Indian who pretended to know the territory but who was evidently a French agent spent some hours lead ing the two men off their route and finally shot at the young officer from close range Gist would have killed him but Washington would not allow it they kept him for several hours and then let him go Then they pressed on eastward. *They had to cross the swollen ice jammed Allegheny River They built a raft but they could force it only halfway through the roaring current and the hammering ice blocks That night they spent freezing on an island in midstream In the morning they struggled across on the ice and pressed on again In his journal the guide recorded that the major was much fatigued But still he kept going eighteen miles a day with a gun and a full pack over rough territory threatened by hostile Indians in mid December with snow and rain falling from the sky and lying thick on the ground*

Now over a period of forty five years he looked back on that Christmas It had been he remembered as fatiguing a journey as it is possible to conceive —and still a necessary one *It was the first of his many services to his country to keep it from being surrounded and strangled from without or poisoned from within And he reflected that it is not necessary to try to be brave or clever or generous or beloved or even happy It is necessary simply to do one s duty All else flows from that Without that all else is useless*

Darkness closed in early in these winter days It was getting toward Christmas of the year 1798 General Charles Pinck ney and his lady were expected for Christmas dinner *The old gentleman finished looking over the land and turned home-ward. He paid no heed to the cold*

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